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ABSTRACT

This dissertation reports on the trend toward an increased emphasis on learning in two-year colleges. The author reviewed the mission statements and current resource development plans of the 106 California community colleges. More than one-third stated that being a learning-centered college was part of their mission, vision, or goals. The study asked how those colleges are preparing their faculty, staff, and administrators to achieve this goal. Six colleges were selected for qualitative case studies, and 40 structured interviews were conducted with administrators, faculty, and staff. Questions included the following: (1) How has the college defined the concept or goal of a learning college? (2) What activities has the college undertaken to achieve this goal? (3) What are the skills the faculty and staff need in order to achieve this goal? and (4) What activities have been provided to specifically prepare faculty, staff, and administrators to be members of a learning college? The paper discusses the research findings within the context of Senge's learning organization model. Based on responses, the author found that defining terms, and therefore concepts, was critical. Many teachers felt they have always been in a learning environment, but defining it as such can suggest their role is inconsequential. Research instrument appended. The research instrument is appended. (Contains 200 references.) (NB)

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ED 466 248

BUILDING LEARNING COLLEGES: PREPARING COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY AND STAFF

A dissertation submitted

by

HARRIETT J. ROBLES

to

THE FIELDING INSTITUTE

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

This dissertation has been
accepted for the faculty of
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Faculty Reader

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San José State University

Jody Hironaka, M.A.
Student Reader

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Abstract

Building Learning Colleges: Preparing Community College Faculty and Staff

By

Harriett J. Robles

One of the current trends in California community colleges is an increased emphasis on learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995; O'Banion, 1997b). Over one third of California community colleges state that being a learning-centered college is part of their mission, vision, or goals. This study asks the question: For those California community colleges that have embraced the goal of becoming learning-centered institutions, how are their faculty, staff, and administrators prepared to achieve this goal?

The research included a review of the mission statements and of the current human resource development plans of 106 California community colleges. Six colleges were selected for qualitative case studies. Forty structured interviews were conducted with administrators, faculty, and staff. Questions included: (1) How has the college defined the concept or goal of a learning college? (2) What activities has the college undertaken to achieve this goal? (3) What are the skills faculty and staff need in order to achieve this goal? (4) What activities have been provided to specifically prepare faculty, staff, and administrators to be members of a learning college?

The findings were discussed within the context of Senge's (1990) learning organization model. They showed that (1) to a high degree, colleges concur that their principal goal is student success in the form of student learning; (2) despite skepticism,

most community colleges appear to be shifting from the instructional to the learning paradigm; (3) community colleges are excellent incubators for personal mastery; (4) by virtue of shared governance and a trend toward interdisciplinarity, community colleges are well positioned to develop learning organization skills; (5) Lack of mechanisms to provide reinforcing feedback is the weakest link for colleges attempting to become learning-centered.

This study makes eight recommendations for becoming a learning-centered college: (1) define terms; (2) know the campus cultures; (3) make the learning needs of the organization as important and as explicit as the learning needs of students; (4) make professional development an integral part of institutional planning; (5) specify organizational skills in job announcements; (6) support professional development; (7) develop feedback mechanisms; (8) think of all employees as learners.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

One of the major trends in California community colleges is an increased emphasis on learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995). It is part of the latest reform cycle in higher education and reflects concerns about the accountability, adaptability, and perhaps even the survivability of community colleges in a period of rapid change. The sources of this change, which have been noted by many (Altbach, 1985; Cohen & Brawer, 1982; Kerr, 1994; O'Banion, 1997a, 1997b; Stark & Lattuca, 1997), are varied: changes in demographics, advances in technology, availability of resources, public concern about accountability, the shift to a global economy, and demand for training that responds to rapidly changing needs. Community colleges are arguably the most sensitive of the higher education segments to external influences (ERIC, 1998, p. 1), including the competition created by proprietary institutions such as the University of Phoenix and National University (Strosnider, 1997). Community colleges must adapt to a world where "the ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage" (de Geus in Senge, 1990, p. 4). As a result, a number of colleges have embraced the learning organization model, wherein

> people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together. . . a "learning organization" [is] an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future. (Senge, 1990, pp. 3, 14)

As Senge (1990) has noted, however, awareness alone is not sufficient to make substantive change. Colleges must master and employ specific skills to think and act systemically. In this respect, they face some formidable obstacles, notably an historic resistance to change (Toombs & Tierney, 1991). Faculty and staff are especially skeptical of and uncomfortable with theories that emerge from the corporate sector and are applied to an academic environment (Seymour, 1993, p. 49). There is also a persistent belief among many community college faculty and staff that they are and always have been "learning institutions." Any suggestion to the contrary is primarily the result of poor public relations, in their opinion (Roueche, Johnson, & Roueche, 1997, p. 5). Nevertheless, the California community college system has a general grasp of the need for change; it is the dominant theme among community college organizations and at conferences statewide.

Becoming a learning organization and acting systemically require knowledge and a set of specific skills that most organizations must make available to their employees – in this case faculty, staff, and administrators. For this shift to a learning organization to be effective, participants should have communication skills and systems knowledge. They should be exposed to and provided with sustained practice in the core disciplines which Senge proposed are necessary in a true learning organization: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, systems thinking, and team learning (Senge, 1990). This study asks the question: For those California community colleges that have embraced the goal of becoming learning-centered institutions, how are their faculty, staff, and

administrators prepared to achieve that goal? The focus of this study is on the college-employee relationship and professional development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine how California community colleges that have formally committed to the goal of becoming learning-centered colleges are preparing their faculty and staff to be active members of such institutions.

As a community college instructor and administrator for 18 years, I have had the opportunity to observe the community college system in periods of both relative stability and instability. The latter is principally the result of two conflicting forces: (1) growing demand for services from an increasingly diverse student population (2) in a time of dramatically dwindling resources. Those forces collided during an especially turbulent period of rapid technological change, which coincided with a period of economic instability. It was clear that change was both expected and necessary, but the nature and implications of those changes were not so clear.

Building upon the reform movement of the 1980s and shaped by demands for accountability, community colleges found themselves the focus of a learning revolution. This revolution shifted the paradigm from one focused on the delivery of instruction to one focused on the production of learning. It was a shift from measuring inputs to measuring outcomes. Colleges increasingly embraced the notion of focusing on student learning and began to refer to themselves and their activities as *learning-centered,*

learning communities, and sometimes *learning organizations*. Over one third of California's 106 community colleges have mission, vision, or goals statements which include some reference to the concept using one or more of the terms mentioned above, but all put primary emphasis upon student learning. Fewer colleges speak directly to the issue of becoming a learning organization, yet that may be the most critical component of the revolution. If college faculty, staff, and administrators do not understand, accept, and make changes in the way of doing their business, then substantive, long-term change is not likely to occur.

Background and Need for the Study

The corporate sector spends $40 billion a year on training (Green & McDade, 1994, p. 3). Motorola spends 3.6% of its revenues on education and plans to double that amount (Nevis, DiBella, & Gould, 1997, p. 12). Higher education, itself a $150 billion enterprise devoting as much as 80% or more of operating budgets to personnel, should be expected to spend a proportionate amount on training. "Yet institutions invest little in the development of these valuable human resources, and when times get tough, funds for faculty and administrative development are among the first casualties" (Green & McDade, 1994, p. 3). The California community college system, which includes 106 colleges in 71 districts serving 1.4 million students, is the largest system of public higher education in the nation. Faculty, staff, and administrators arguably represent the system's single most important investment and expenditure.

Following the enactment of Assembly Bill 1725 in 1988, a Faculty and Staff Development Fund was established per the Education Code (Appendix A) and $5 million was appropriated annually to support local faculty and staff development activities. Also required was the establishment of local staff development committees, which would assess development needs, develop a plan, and submit annual compliance reports to the state. At that time, $5 million was roughly .5% of the system budget but was expected to grow to as much as 2%. However, it remains at the original amount of $5 million. Given the current budget of the system, the amount allocated to staff development should be nearly $25 million or 5 times the original amount budgeted more than a decade ago.

Although many colleges seem to have heightened awareness of themselves as systems, there are questions as to whether and to what degree those colleges have developed faculty and staff capabilities to think and act systemically, much less to use that knowledge to find creative and long-term solutions that will help colleges achieve their goals. If community colleges are to become the learning-centered organizations they strive to be, one of their primary commitments should be to the education of their own faculty and staff in systems thinking and practices.

The research conducted for this study showed that over one third of California community colleges directly state or imply that being a learning community/college/organization is part of their mission, vision, or goals. They stress learning over teaching, learning that is lifelong, and the desire to be a community of learners – key components of a learning organization as described by Senge (1990). For example:

> Butte College creates a student-centered, community-based environment where people engage as *partners in learning*, empowering them to become productive, literate and responsible members of a diverse society. (http://www/butte.cc.ca.us/)

> As a *teaching/learning community*, we come together and strive to meet the needs, aspirations, and goals of our changing student population and communities. – Rio Hondo College (http://www.rh.cc.ca.us)

> As a *learning community*, we at Santa Barbara City College approach this task with enthusiasm, optimism, and confidence in our ability to serve students and the community in a manner consistent with our most fundamental values: achieving educational excellence, maintaining the needs of students as our central focus in determining policies and practices, providing a cooperative and collegial environment, and supporting individual dignity, worth and the potential for growth. (http://www.sbcc.cc.ca.us/)

> Palomar College empowers students to learn and empowers our educational team – faculty, staff, and administrators – to create powerful *learning environments*. . . . We provide an environment where persons of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds become *partners in learning*. (http://www.palomar.edu/)

Substantial institutional resources and time have been invested in creating mission and vision statements. It is not clear whether those resources have been well spent. Do the mission or vision statements really impact the way college employees view their roles and perform their duties? Or is it the case, as one faculty member put it, that "no mission or strategic plan matters because I know what my role in the classroom is, what my mission is" (Staff Development Coordinator, College B)?

Another indication that questions need to be asked about the impact of the learning revolution (O'Banion, 1996) is the recent publication of the California State Academic Senate position paper, "The Future of the Community College: A Faculty

Perspective" (California Community Colleges Academic Senate, 1999). It would seem that no community college educator could argue against learning as the goal for instruction. Nevertheless, there is substantial discomfort with the concept. Faculty in particular are suspicious of the terminology, the origins, and some of the implications of the debate. They are especially skittish of the connection they perceive with the corporate Total Quality Management (TQM) movement and the questionable perception of students as customers. In a position paper on the faculty perspective of the future of community colleges, the California Academic Senate stated:

> The Academic Senate sees the demand that community colleges become customer-driven learning institutions, focussed on student outcomes, as of a piece with the agenda that would commodify knowledge and make colleges an extension of the marketplace. The learning institution that we are encouraged to become here is not one in which student learning is maximized; rather, it is one in which the institution "learns" to satisfy, uncritically and quickly, the demands of industry. It is in fact a ploy to extend corporate welfare. (California Community Colleges Academic Senate, 1999, p. 15)

In light of this and other comments in what is an official position paper of community college faculty representatives, there appears to be some disconnect between the call for a learning revolution and faculty's understanding and support of such a concept.

There does appear to be general agreement that some kind of learning revolution is taking place, whether it be directed at students or the organization itself, whether it is the result of external factors such as technology, or whether it is the result of recent developments in cognitive theory. There is considerable disagreement, however, as to both the current and long-term impact of this phenomenon. Is it truly a revolution or

merely a trend? Is it having the same impact systemwide or only at certain institutions? As noted above, many of California's community colleges have mission, vision, or goals statements which include some reference to the learning concept, but these statements are focused primarily on student learning. Few colleges speak directly to the issue of preparing faculty and staff to be contributing members of a learning organization.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. First, although all employee groups – faculty, classified staff, and administrators – were considered in the study, the emphasis is on faculty.

> The faculty comprise the core of the institution. To be sure, faculty members cannot begin to perform their tasks without adequate support from innumerable others. And the teaching faculty cannot accomplish much of what their jobs require unless there are also students who possess at least a threshold aptitude for, and interest in, learning. Nonetheless, successful teaching and learning cannot be achieved in the absence of a faculty that is caring, competent, committed. (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 3)

The adage that "everyone is equal, but some are more equal than others" may well be the most succinct and accurate description about the position of faculty in relation to other employee groups in higher education. Whether or not one accepts this proposition, there can be no denying that faculty as a group are critical to a college's ability to reach consensus on its mission and vision and to its ability to achieve it. Even classified (non-certificated staff), as positive as they are about their role in promoting the colleges'

mission, note that success or failure depends in large part upon faculty commitment as well as on leadership.

Second, as with any research model, the case study approach used in this study has its strengths and its weaknesses, though Merriam (1998, p.41) asserted that the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. Merriam noted that case studies are well suited to education. They permit the investigation of complex social units with multiple variables, and the insights gained can be used as the foundation for future research as well as for the improvement of practice. Case studies can describe, interpret, or evaluate a phenomenon or build a theory, or a combination of both (Merriam, 1998, p. 43).

The weaknesses of case studies are those that have been applied to qualitative research, in general. For example, the product that results may be too detailed to be of practical use for policymakers. Much is dependent upon the skills of the researcher for whom there are few clear guidelines on how to analyze the data that have been collected. Also of concern is any bias that results from the source of funding for case studies as well as the dissonance that can occur when discrepancies are revealed between espoused theories and theories in action or put more simply, when there is little relationship between what is said, what is perceived, and what is done. The most significant criticism, however, is the concern that since case studies represent only a part of a whole, they may lead to incorrect conclusions, oversimplifications, or exaggerations (Merriam, 1998, p. 42). While the information collected from the colleges in this study was consistent in most cases, it nevertheless applies to six colleges or 5.7% of the total number of colleges in the California community college system.

A third consideration, not necessarily a limitation, is that this study was conducted in the spring of 1999. During 1998-99, California community colleges experienced a significant improvement in their state allocations after years of severe underfunding and reductions following the recession that hit California especially hard in the early 1990s. The additional funds were primarily in the form of one-time technology money but also included $100 million of largely unrestricted ongoing funding to support the Partnership for Excellence, a performance-based funding model adopted in 1998. As a result, when discussing weaknesses and threats with interviewees, there was little or no mention of lack of resources. In fact, many of them stressed that their problems were not due to a lack of funding, even though it is among the most commonly cited reasons in community colleges for not fully pursuing goals and objectives. Therefore, participants were able to identify other causes that might have otherwise been obscured by the funding issue. Had this study been conducted 5 to 7 years earlier, that probably would not have been the situation.

Organization of the Study

The study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter introduces the problem, states the purpose, provides background information, and describes the limitations of the study.

The second chapter provides definitions of terms and a review of the literature pertaining to the subjects of the learning revolution, systems thinking, and the Information Age.

The third chapter includes a review of the literature on adult development and learning theory, professional development, and Assembly Bill 1725, the legislation mandating faculty and staff development in the California community colleges.

The fourth chapter describes the methodology used in this study, including research questions, research design, participants, and procedures.

The fifth chapter presents the findings from the case studies conducted at six colleges. The data are presented and analyzed within the framework of Peter Senge's five disciplines of the learning organization: mental models, building shared vision, personal mastery, systems thinking, and team learning.

The sixth and final chapter summarizes the study, presents conclusions, makes recommendations for action based on the findings, and suggests possible topics for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW: THE LEARNING REVOLUTION, SYSTEMS THINKING, AND THE INFORMATION AGE

Introduction

Educational institutions are highly complex and stratified organizations embedded in even more complex communities (Senge in O'Neil, 1995), a fact not lost on one California community college whose organizational chart begins with a single, uppermost box labeled "World." To examine any phenomenon within higher education means taking into account multiple influences, always being humbly aware that for as many that can be identified, there are almost certainly as many that remain hidden. They are so much a part of a college's culture and most fundamental operating assumptions that they have become invisible, even to an inside observer, perhaps especially to an inside observer.

The central focus of this study was to investigate and describe how selected California community colleges are preparing their faculty and staff to be members of learning-centered institutions. The literature and research that formed the theoretical framework for this study included (a) the learning revolution, (b) systems thinking, (c) the Information Age, (d) adult development and learning, (e) faculty development, and (f) professional development in the California community colleges.

One of the more difficult decisions was how best to organize this review. A chronological approach was not appropriate since one assumption of this study is that the learning revolution, systems thinking, the advent of the Information Age, and recent

theories on adult development and learning are inextricably linked. They are simultaneously both sources and outcomes of the current focus on learning. Likewise, there is no clearly deductive or inductive relationship. In fact, a linear organizational model is not possible. I have elected to organize the material in a way that I believe will best enable the reader to understand the relationships between the concepts and the issues and to understand how these concepts and issues relate to the subject of this dissertation.

The six sections of this review are arranged as follows. In the first section of this chapter, the learning revolution is examined and explained within the context of 20th century reform in higher education with emphasis on the community colleges and the accountability movement. In the second and third sections, the influence of systems thinking and the Information Age on the learning revolution are explored. Chapter 2 also contains definitions of terms.

Fundamental to a learning revolution and to systems thinking is the concept of learning itself. The first section of chapter 3, also a review of the literature, presents an overview of recent research on adult development and learning. The second section looks specifically at faculty learning in the context of professional development. The final section of chapter 3 describes the formal mechanisms for professional development that exist within the California community college system. The reader should note that much of the research is based on data collected from all segments of higher education – 2-year and 4-year institutions – and is generally applicable to community colleges. However, where the community college experience is significantly different, it is so noted.

Definitions of Terms

One of the complicating factors in this research project was the inconsistent use of terminology as evidenced by the mingling of the terms *learning community, learning college,* and *learning organization.* Difficulty with terminology is not unheard of in educational research. In one of his studies, Gaff (1976) noted that

> [the] terms [used by faculty development specialists] that have taken on special meanings for persons working in instructional-improvement programs has posed continuous problems in conducting this research. I was ignorant of the significance of the different words and phrases used by individuals at the schools I was studying . . . and it became necessary for me to develop a linguistic self-consciousness that allowed me to use the "in-house" terms. (Gaff, 1976, p. 100)

The first term that needs to be defined is *learning*. Twigg (1995) observed that the definition of learning is changing as our expectations change about what students need to learn. Increasingly, there is less emphasis on mastering a body of knowledge and more emphasis on skills such as "critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and effective communication, along with such abilities as finding needed information and working well with others" (Twigg, 1995, p. 3). She also noted that in addition to what should be learned, our notions of who is learning and when and where learning occurs are changing as a result of technological advances.

The field of learning theory is a complex one, containing at least three different orientations: behaviorist, cognitive, and humanistic (Witt, n.d.). All three orientations emphasize the aspects of change, duration, and process. The behaviorist orientation

focuses on external change and observable behavior; the cognitive, on the internal; and the humanistic on self-actualization and self-directedness. Witt noted that most of adult learning theory, as well as a great deal of the theory about organizational learning, comes from the humanistic perspective.

The definition of learning used in this study is based on the constructivist model and the work of Berryman (1991), Brooks and Brooks (1993), Collins, Brown, and Newman (1989), Marzano (1992), and Spielberger (1992), which is cited in Glatthorn and Fox (1996, pp. 5-6). According to Glatthorn and Fox, learning based on constructivism has distinct characteristics. This type of learning is an active meaning-making process. It is always subjective and personal, contextualized, social, and affective. It is strongly influenced by the learner's development. It views the nature of the learning task as crucial.

It became important to establish early in my interviews which term was primarily used on a particular college campus as well as how the college and the interviewee defined that term. Or, if all the terms were in use, how did the interviewee distinguish among them, if at all? The need for clear definitions has been addressed by O'Banion (1996), one of the reform movement's leading spokespersons. "As community colleges embrace the learning revolution, there is some understandable confusion regarding a number of terms that have appropriated the word 'learning' as part of their nomenclature" (O'Banion, 1996, p. 1). O'Banion's definitions are used throughout this study (see Table 1).

Table 1

Definitions of Learning Community, Learning Organization, and Learning College

Learning community	"A curricular intervention designed to enhance collaboration and expand learning. . . [and which] purposefully restructures the curriculum to link together courses or course work so that students find greater coherence in what they are learning, as well as increased intellectual interaction with faculty and students."
Learning organization	One in which "people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together." O'Banion (1996) bases his definition on that of Senge (1990, p. 3) and notes, "In some ways, a learning organization is designed for the staff of the institution, while a learning-centered institution is designed for the students."
Learning college	A term which "is much more useful in describing the comprehensive nature of a community college committed to placing learning first than are the terms *learning communities* and *learning organizations*. The learning college places learning first and provides educational experiences for learners any way, any place, any time."

From "Learning Communities, Learning Organizations, and Learning Colleges" (pp.1-2), by T. O'Banion, 1996, Leadership Abstracts, 9(8).

O'Banion (1996) observed that it is possible to have learning communities without necessarily being part of the learning revolution. Likewise, it is possible to be a learning organization and still not be learning-centered, although the one provides a solid foundation for the other. This observation was echoed by the chancellor of a multi-college district used in this study:

> A learning college is not the same thing as a learning organization. Ideally, a college should be both, but it is possible to be one without the other. One difference is that a learning college costs, but a learning organization can save resources because mistakes won't be repeated. There is internal support for a learning college and learning for students but some resistance to asking the tough questions about being a learning organization. For example, what are the major lessons to be learned from enrollment trends? Are long term implications being addressed?

The term *learning college* embraces the other two and is the preferred concept for achieving the goals of the learning revolution, in O'Banion's opinion. Other terms used in this study include:

AB1725: California Assembly Bill 1725, passed in 1988, attempted to both restructure and reform the California community colleges. It addressed a number of key areas including governance, mission and functions, and staffing. It mandated staff development programs for the state's community colleges (Griffin, 1997).

Andragogy: The term *andragogy* is defined as the art or science of leading adult learning and was first used by a German educator, Alexander Kapp, in 1833 (Ingalls, 1972). It is distinct from *pedagogy*, even though the distinction is much less recognized by American educators than it is by their European counterparts. See chapter 3 for an in-depth discussion of andragogy and andragogy in relation to pedagogy.

Bureaucracy: Abbott (1969, p. 43) based his description of bureaucracy on Weber (1963). According to Abbott, the essential and distinctive characteristics of a bureaucracy include those listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Characteristics of a Bureaucracy

- Regular activities required for the purposes of the organization are distributed in fixed ways as official duties.
- The positions in an organization are arranged on the principle of office hierarchy and of levels of graded authority.
- The management of activities is controlled by general rules which are more or less stable, more or less exhaustive, and which can be learned.
- Bureaucracy develops the more perfectly the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculations.
- Employment in a bureaucracy is based upon technical competence and constitutes a career.

From "Hierarchical Impediments to Innovation in Educational Organizations" (p. 43), by M. G. Abbott. In F. D. Carver and T. J. Sergiovanni (Eds.), Organizations and Human Behavior: Focus on Schools (pp. 42-50), New York: McGraw-Hill.

Abbott (1969, p. 44-45) believed American schools are highly developed bureaucracies because the school organization has clearly been influenced by the need for specialization, it has a clearly defined hierarchy of authority, it depends upon general rules to control behavior, organizational relationships are impersonal, and employment is based upon technical competence and constitutes for most members a professional career.

Change (organizational or cultural): Organizational or cultural change is defined according to Deal and Kennedy (1982).

> When we speak of organizational or cultural change we mean real changes in the behavior of people throughout the organization. In a technical sense we mean people in the organization identifying with new

> role-model heroes. We mean people telling different stories to one another to explain what is occurring around them. We mean people spending their time differently on a day-to-day basis. . .and we mean for the behavior to be pervasive. . . a cultural transformation. (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 159)

Senge et al. (1999, pp. 6, 10) observed that most organizational change efforts fail because they cannot be sustained without a fundamental shift in the way we think about change. He proposed a biologically oriented model, the "dance of change," that is based on the interplay between growth and limiting processes. Peterson et al. (1997) noted that "there is an emerging reconceptionalization of organizational change that emphasizes individual learning as the core process in organizational change. Organizational change itself is viewed as organizational learning" (Peterson, Dill, Mets, and Associates, 1997, p. 345).

Culture: Bergquist (1992) examined culture from several perspectives: the anthropological definition provided by Malinowski (1948), the developmental approach taken by Lessem (1990), and the organizational perspective of Schein (1985). Bergquist combined the common elements of these three definitions and proposed that culture

> provides meaning and context for a specific group of people. . .and furthermore, . . . helps to define the nature of reality for those people who are part of that culture. . . .Culture serves an overarching purpose. A culture is established around the production of something valued by its members. A culture does not exist for itself; rather, it exists to provide a context. . . . The culture of academic organizations must thus be understood within the context of the educational purposes of collegiate institutions. (Bergquist, 1992, pp. 2-3)

Bergquist (1992) and Kuh and Whitt (1988) noted that in education, there are a number of overlapping and sometimes internally conflicted cultures composed of faculty,

staff, administrators, and students. Deal and Peterson (1998) stressed that culture matters because "in study after study, where culture did not support and encourage reform, it did not happen. It is almost impossible to overstate the importance of culture and its relationship to improved student learning" (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

Profession, professional: The definition used in this study is that of Eraut (1993):

> The concept of a profession, which evolved in the nineteenth century in Britain and North America, is closely tied to an implicit social contract, whereby professionals are given a degree of autonomy by a society which expects them to use their expertise altruistically for the benefit of others. The arrangement recognizes both that a profession possesses unique expertise and that the expertise has to be uniquely exercised by individual professionals in unique situations. (Eraut, 1993, p. 25)

How far teaching qualifies as a profession in this sense is questionable, in Eraut's opinion, but in any case, there are important implications for accountability. "There are many intermediate positions between these extremes but the distinction between being accountable for doing what one is told and being accountable for the use of delegated authority remains important" (Eraut, 1993, p. 25).

As for professionals, Houle (1980) described them as those who are

> deeply versed in advanced and subtle bodies of knowledge which they apply with dedication in solving complex practical problems. They learn by study, apprenticeship and experience. . . constantly moving forward and backward from theory to practice. Such people protect one another. . . the price of protection is vigilance against poor performance and unethical behavior. (Houle, 1980, p. 1)

Freedman, Brown, Norbert, Shukraft, Bloom and Sanford (1979), and Gaff (1976) argued that faculty are not true professionals. Freedman et al. did not believe teaching is

a profession because teachers don't talk about what they do, nor do they consciously plan outcomes (1979, p. 8). Gaff asserted that

> our colleges and universities are now staffed by faculty who, in general, have never studied the history of their profession, are unfamiliar with the topography of the educational landscape, are unaware of the professional literature in higher education, and have never been expected to formulate systematically their own philosophies of education or their views about teaching and learning. (Gaff, 1976, p. 16)

Cross (1995) argued that "faculty members will have to develop a profession of teaching if education is to prepare for major change" (Cross, 1995, p. 12).

Corwin (1969) identified and examined the problem of professional persons in public organizations such as colleges and universities and noted the tension that exists between the authority of the professional, on the one hand, and the obligation of the professional as employee, on the other. Resnick and Hall (1998, p. 12) argued that a redefinition of the term *professional* is warranted. Whereas a professional was once considered to be someone who had already acquired expertise, now a professional is defined as someone who is continually learning.

Professional Development: Zuber-Skerritt (1992) defined professional development as the "development, self-development, and institutional management of faculty (or academic) staff at all levels. . . with reference to their activities and responsibilities as teachers and managers in higher education" (Zuber-Skerritt, 1992, p. 145).

Staff development and *professional development* are often used as synonyms, even though the terms have different origins (Webb, 1996, p. 1). In California community

colleges, *staff development* is the term commonly used to describe professional development programs for all employee groups: faculty, classified staff, and administrators. One of the drawbacks of the term is that it can be interpreted as referring to only classified staff. *Professional development* is more inclusive, but it is very similar to another common term, *professional growth and development*, which primarily refers to a specific kind of development program resulting in salary increases. *Human resource development* is an emerging concept in higher education, but the term is not widely used. Terminology is important because if it is not sufficiently inclusive, members of a group may feel excluded and the program may not achieve its full potential (Oromaner, 1998, p. 3). I have elected to use the term *professional development* because it is the most inclusive term. It should be noted, however, that the focus in this study is on faculty.

The Learning Revolution

California community colleges are in the midst of a reform cycle, one that has characterized higher education since the early 1980s. This broader reform movement has been described variously as a *learning revolution*, a *paradigm shift*, and a *societal transformation* (O'Banion, 1997a, p. 8). Among the terms most commonly used in the literature and in the various mission/vision/goals statements of California community colleges are *learning college, learning paradigm, learning community,* and *learning organization*. The operative word is *learning*, of course (see Appendix B), but what is the nature of this movement and what are its sources?

There have been a number of comprehensive studies on the development of American higher education, including those of Altbach, Berdahl, and Gumport (1994), Bérubé (1994), Boyer (1987), Cohen and Brawer (1982), Dougherty (1994), Levine (1978), McGuinness and Aims (1994), McNeil (1985), Sergiovanni and Moore (1989), Shires, Krop, Benjamin, Carroll, and Gray (1994), Stark and Lattuca (1997), Swoboda (1979), Taylor (1979), Thelin (1994), and Zusman (1994). To chronicle the development of American higher education is to recognize patterns of "periodically recurring debates about key issues, superimposed on a long-term trend toward diversification of institutions, educational missions, students, and programs" (Stark & Lattuca, 1997, p. 42).

The reform period of most importance to this study is the one that began in the 1980s, following two distinctly different decades. The Golden Age of higher education (Kerr, 1994, p. 10) occurred between 1958 and 1968. It was a time of broadened missions and massive expansion of enrollments as a result of the GI Bill. Society supported this expansion through increased allocations. It was during this period that community colleges experienced their greatest growth. By 1975, there were nearly 1,200 community and junior colleges serving 5 million students, more than had been enrolled in all of higher education only a decade or so earlier (Cohen, 1998, p. 195). California would create the single largest community college system, with 106 colleges serving over 1.4 million students, the largest system of higher education in the nation.

Following the Golden Age came the 1970s, "not a happy time" for higher education (Altbach, Kelly, & Weis, 1985, p. 17). The years from 1968 to 1981 brought a

sharp change of focus. The first part of this period was characterized by a search for ways to broaden opportunities for students to attend college, initiated by federal student loan programs. The obvious objective was to promote greater equality of educational opportunity. However, support for these initiatives began to erode because of sharp inflation, increased enrollments, and the ascendancy of other social priorities. Public confidence in American higher education was also beginning to erode. The pace of community college development began to slow in the 1970s because of increasing fiscal stringency and the fact that the colleges were running out of new populations to serve (Dougherty, 1994, p. 118).

As American higher education entered the 1980s, the environment was an unstable one. No longer were there adequate resources to support expansion. Growth in community colleges nearly ceased, a trend which continued into the 1990s as the nation slowly recovered from its most recent recession. There were external pressures in the form of increasing expectations from both the public and private sectors. As federal and private funding increased, so did the requirements that colleges and universities be held more accountable for those funds (Berdahl & McConnell, 1994, p. 63). In particular, there was concern that the loosened requirements of the 1960s and the postwar emphasis on access that continued through the 1970s had weakened the curriculum to the point where America was not adequately preparing a workforce that was capable of competing in a global economy (Altbach et al., 1985, p. 19). Faculty were unsettled in terms of their working conditions, their perceptions that academic standards had been threatened by the loosened standards of the previous decades, and the influx of nontraditional students

(Stark & Lattuca, 1997, p. 65). Increasingly, concern was expressed about whether the American public school system and higher education were achieving acceptable levels of "excellence" and "quality."

> As several reports stated, we just don't know how good or bad the schools are; all we really know at this point is that, for a diversity of reasons, most Americans seem to be dissatisfied with the schools and that, in and of itself, makes educational reform a priority. (Kelly & Seller, 1985, pp. 34-35)

The 1980s proved to be one of the more important reform periods in the history of American higher education and one that would be studied closely by educators (Altbach, 1985; Apple, 1985; Astin, 1985; Boyer, 1985; Kelly & Seller, 1985; Peterson, 1985; Stark & Lattuca, 1997). Beginning in 1980-81, there was a sharp swing away from concerns about equity and access toward concerns about quality, efficient use of resources, and broadened missions. While the issues were not unique, the environment was. This time, new technology had increased the rate of change. Most important, this time the system did not receive an infusion of funding to help cope with the changes brought about by reform efforts. With the 1980 elections entered a new national leadership determined to shrink domestic social spending. The Reagan administration cut funding for education by 25% (Altbach et al., 1985, p. 18).

The 1980s also saw an unprecedented revival of 1940s reforms (Stark & Lattuca, 1997) as stakeholders became more concerned about quality. A number of reports were issued, the first wave of which was directed toward the public elementary and secondary systems and began with *A Nation at Risk*, sponsored by the National Commission on Excellence (1983). This was the first report to capture public attention because of its

sweeping indictment of precollegiate education. A second wave of reports followed which targeted higher education and which was equally critical. These reports included *To Reclaim a Legacy: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education* (Bennett, 1984), *Involvement in Learning: Realizing the Potential of American Higher Education* (National Institute of Education, 1984), and *Integrity in the College Curriculum: A Report to the Academic Community* (Association of American Colleges, 1985).

What was the impact of the reform movements of the 1980s? Trow (1994) concluded that the reports did more harm than good "because these reports, by substituting prescription for analysis, misled our supporters and the general public into believing that these difficult problems are simpler then they are" (Trow, 1994, p. 294). Stark and Lattuca (1997) asserted that there was at least an increased level of interest and discussion and more attention was paid to issues of excellence and accountability (Stark & Lattuca, 1997, p. 97). Others (Spitzberg & Irving, 1994, p. 289; O'Banion, 1997b, pp. 4-7) seemed to agree that the 1980s were a decade of much talk and little action and that the long-term impact in terms of measurable change ranged from sporadic to negligible. *An American Imperative* (1993), produced by the Wingspread Group, asserted that the first alarms of the 1980s may not have been heard and fully comprehended (Stark & Lattuca, 1997).

The decade to follow would prove to be a troublesome one for higher education. "The overarching problem is that the North American public's love affair with its institutions of higher education has come to an end; at the very least, the friendship has cooled" (Roueche et al., 1997, p. 4). The 1990s have been called "the time of troubles"

for higher education, according to Kerr (1994, p. 13). He observed that it is society, not higher education itself, that is the primary initiator of change. Society in the 1990s is demanding a reordering of the priorities of higher education and a more efficient use of resources. For the first time, higher education is mostly a reactive defender of the status quo. Kerr (1994) gave several reasons for American society's aggression toward higher education:

1. It has fewer new resources to spread around.
2. It has more claimants on those resources
3. It demands that higher education, as never before, concentrate on supporting a national economy that is engaged in intensified international competition.

"The number one priority is now clearly being given to advancing human capability, with educational justice in second place, with lesser places (if any at all) to developmental growth, pure learning, or an evaluation (criticism) of society" (Kerr, 1994, p. 13). Society is insisting on accountability, conveying its concerns by such concrete means as performance-based funding for higher education.

The most recent trend, some call it a revolution (O'Banion, 1997a; Barr & Tagg, 1995), began in the late 1980s and gained momentum during the 1990s. Called the "learning revolution," it is another phase in the continuing cycle of reform in higher education. There are, however, some differences from previous reforms – differences that may be sufficient to make the learning revolution less of a passing trend and more of a permanent shift in the instructional paradigm. It is also a trend that has had more

impact on the community college segment of higher education than on 4-year institutions, perhaps because of the historical emphasis on teaching as its primary mission.

As noted above, higher education was not completely immune to criticism during the reform era of the 1980s. Stark and Lattuca (1997) chronicle 12 major reports critical of higher education which were produced between 1984 and 1993 and eight major proposals for reform from 1988 to 1994 (Stark & Lattuca, 1997, p. 81). The Wingspread report, *An American Imperative: Higher Expectations for Higher Education* (1993), appears to have had the greatest causal influence on the learning revolution. *An American Imperative* was not very different from *A Nation at Risk*, published a decade earlier.

> The 1983 and 1993 reports were remarkably similar in their language in their analysis of the issues. Both reports were issued as "Open Letters" to the public; both reports indicated that the current system of education was inappropriate for the complexity of American society; both reports cited extensive data on the failures of students; both reports sounded the alarm as an "imperative" for a society "at great risk." (O'Banion, 1997a, p.7)

However, there was a significant difference between the two, chiefly in the solutions each suggested. *A Nation at Risk* proposed strengthening the current system, while *An American Imperative* advocated changing "the historical architecture of education" (O'Banion, 1997a, p. 7) by putting learning at the center of what colleges and universities do. On the surface, such a recommendation would seem to be superfluous. Who would argue that learning is not at the center of education? In reality, however, the recommendation was the beginning of a conscious shift in focus from the way institutions had measured learning – that is from measuring inputs (number of students, amount of

credit hours, student-teacher ratios, investments in equipment, facilities) and through-puts (number of certificates and degrees, number of transfers and graduates, number of successful course completions) to measuring out-puts (what students could demonstrate they had learned in terms of knowledge and skills). Another way of describing the shift, one that proved to be controversial, was to say that colleges and universities should focus on learning (outcomes), not on teaching (inputs).

As O'Banion noted (1997a, p. 7), this shift in focus was alternately termed a learning revolution (Oblinger & Rush, 1997) or a shift in the learning paradigm (Boggs, 1995-96, Barr and Tagg 1995). Drucker proposed that it was "on the par of a societal transformation" (O'Banion, 1997a, p. 8). Regardless, it coincided with a temporary interest on the part of higher education with Total Quality Management (TQM) principles and a more lasting concern with assessment and evaluation of institutional effectiveness and of student learning, the latter reinforced by a shift in the focus of accreditation standards and an increase in the adoption of performance-based funding mechanisms for public systems of higher education.

The juxtaposing of the terms *teaching* and *learning* led many in higher education to conclude that teaching was now less valued and by extension, so were instructors, many of whom had been hired in the boom period of the 1960s and 1970s and now had 20 or more years of teaching experience. Subsequent articles (O'Banion, 1996; Barr, 1998; Boggs, 1999) have attempted to clarify the intent of the movement.

Probably the single most influential statement about the learning revolution was Barr and Tagg's seminal article in *Change* (1995), "From Teaching to Learning – A New

Paradigm for Undergraduate Education." In this article, they described a profound shift in higher education, from an instructional paradigm (a college is an institution that exists to provide instruction) to a learning paradigm (a college is an institution that exists to produce learning).

> We call the traditional, dominant paradigm the "Instruction Paradigm." Under it, colleges have created complex structures to provide for the activity of teaching conceive ! primarily as delivering 50-minute lectures. The mission of a college is to deliver instruction. Now, however, we are beginning to recognize that our dominant paradigm mistakes a means for an end. It takes the means or method called "instruction" or "teaching" and makes it the college's end or purpose. To say that the purpose of colleges is to provide instruction is like saying that General Motors' business is to operate assembly lines or that the purpose of medical care is to fill hospital beds. We now see that our mission is not instruction but rather that of producing learning with every student by whatever means work best. (Barr & Tagg, 1995)

Barr and Tagg compared the two paradigms on the basis of six criteria: (1) mission and purposes, (2) criteria for success, (3) teaching/learning structures, (4) learning theory, (5) productivity and funding, and (6) nature of roles (see Appendix C, Table 11). It is their thoughts on the teaching/learning structures which are of primary interest here.

Barr and Tagg defined *structures* as

> those features of an organization that are stable over time and that form the framework within which activities and processes occur and through which the purposes of the organization are achieved. Structure includes the organization chart, role and reward systems, technologies and methods, facilities and equipment, decision-making customs, communication channels, feedback loops, financial arrangements, and funding streams. (1995, p. 18)

Their discussion of the importance of structure in the shift to a learning paradigm is based on the work of Peter Senge (1990), who asserted that institutions seldom consider how their organizational structures and their systems affect performance. But, as Barr and Tagg noted, there are good reasons to do so.

> First, restructuring offers the greatest hope for increasing organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Structure is leverage. If you change the structure in which people work, you increase or decrease the leverage applied to their efforts. A change in structure can either increase productivity or change the nature of organizational outcomes. Second, structure is the concrete manifestation of the abstract principles of the organization's governing paradigm. Structures reflecting an old paradigm can frustrate the best ideas and innovations of new-paradigm thinkers. As the governing paradigm changes, so likewise must the organization's structures. (Barr & Tagg, 1995. p. 18)

In the eyes of Barr and Tagg, the old instructional paradigm is based on an atomistic structure that is rigid in terms of time (50-minute periods) and place (classroom). It is also based on the traditional and highly compartmentalized system of disciplines, departments, and divisions, structures which inherently complicate opportunities to collaborate across disciplines. In contrast, the new learning paradigm is holistic in nature, providing learning at any time and in any place or by any means possible. It is cross-disciplinary and collaborative. Assessment is based on specified learning results or outcomes, and a degree or certificate represents demonstrated knowledge and skills, not primarily time on task.

> From the point of view of the Learning Paradigm, these Instruction Paradigm teaching and learning structures present immense barriers to improving student learning and success. They provide no space and support for redesigned learning environments or for experimenting with alternative learning technologies. They don't provide for, warrant, or

> reward assessing whether student learning has occurred or is improving. (Barr & Tagg, 1995, p. 20)

For Barr and Tagg, the key to a successful shift to the learning paradigm is an "institutionwide assessment and information system" which would provide "constant, useful feedback on institutional performance" (Barr & Tagg, 1995, p. 20). While their focus is on student learning (i.e., the knowledge and skills graduates should possess), the concept is one that is equally appropriate for measuring institutional learning. In this respect, Barr and Tagg's proposals are closely aligned with the systems theories of Senge, Schön, and Argyris, which stress systematic feedback as a means of improving organizational performance. To better understand the influence of systems theory on the learning paradigm, it is useful to review what the literature has to say about systems thinking, especially in relation to education.

Systems Thinking

Performance models developed primarily for the corporate world found their way into academe during the 1980s and 1990s. There are several reasons for this phenomenon. They include the shift from a local to a global economy, heightened expectations in a period of limited resources, and increasing demand for accountability. There has also been more dialogue between business and higher education about students' lack of skills necessary to work in a new and continually changing environment. This collaboration was documented in a 1989 national report, *What Work Requires of*

Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000, issued by the U.S. Department of Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills.

Two examples of corporate performance models which higher education considered were Total Quality Management (TQM) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). These are management approaches and organizational paradigms adopted by businesses in reaction to increasing international competition, especially from Japan. Their origins lie in the organizations of mass production that burgeoned after World War II. They share the same principles: a workplace of continuous improvement, client-centeredness, use of measurement and benchmarking for decision-making, teamwork, and individual empowerment (Peterson et al., 1997, p. 15). Perhaps the only major difference between the two is the terminology. *Management* suggests that the principles are focused on managers. Moreover, the term implies an action that is done to someone or something, an unpopular concept in higher education. The most notable of the TQM proponents are Deming (1982), who developed 14 points for improving quality and productivity in the manufacturing sector, and Juran (1964), who emphasized the importance of the user's needs and expectations. These points were also applied to the service sector (Crosby, 1979) and eventually to education (Cornesky et al., 1992; Seymour, 1991).

Just as education had adopted the "cult of efficiency" or the factory model from the business world in the early 1900s, so did it eventually consider the concepts of TQM (Cornesky et al., 1992). Some community colleges embraced the movement, forming The Continuous Quality Improvement Network, a group of community colleges which

led the transformation. In 1995, the Baldridge National Quality Award was extended to education, using the same framework as the one designed for business but with a focus on learning-centered education (Wolverton, 1994, p. 14).

The transformation has had limited impact, however, with some effect on management structures within the colleges and relatively little effect on the learning process (O'Banion, 1997b, p. 98). The adoption of business concepts and terminology has not been widely embraced by faculty, especially the concept of student as customer. Faculty perceive the learning process to be something more than a business transaction. Mellow (1996) referred to the relationship between higher education and TQM as a "flirtation. . . TQM might be seen as the last best attempt of the late Industrial Era to build effective organizations" (Mellow, 1996, p. 8). For these reasons, and because many colleges only partially understood the concepts of TQM and only partially implemented it, the TQM movement has not changed fundamental practices and beliefs in spite of the many similarities between TQM and learning organizations (O'Banion, 1997b, p. 98). Even so, there is little doubt that the TQM movement reinforced the expectation that colleges engage in a continuous process of evaluation and adjustment.

As with the learning paradigm, TQM terminology is loaded for faculty (Hodges & Milliron, 1997, p. 1), who resist thinking of students as "customers" or the learning process as a business transaction for which "satisfaction" is a measure of success. "Students can be very satisfied and poorly served. By the same token, they can be dissatisfied even though they were well served" (L. Schreibstein, personal communication, 1998). More acceptable was the concept that students were indeed

customers at specific points in the educational process, for example, registration. Also acceptable was the concept of internal customers, for example, college faculty and staff as customers of district services such as facilities and computer services.

One difficulty with the TQM movement may well have been its emphasis on management. Traditionally, faculty in higher education have been suspicious of those who enter the administrative ranks, and like many professionals, they are adverse to the concept of being managed. Also, administrative roles in higher education are often poorly defined, amounting to a few clear responsibilities and numerous "other duties as assigned." Within short order, job descriptions and actual duties bear little resemblance to one another. Thus, the attention focused on management and its role in assuring quality, especially in the classroom, was one that did not sit well with either faculty or administration. This was especially the case because colleges were not structured to implement many of the TQM tenets, particularly in terms of systematic assessment and evaluation. "By 1994, it became apparent that the TQM process had become bureaucratized and incapable of fast, responsive innovation. The college leadership looked for a new model. . . and found their answer in Senge's less structured concept of a learning organization" (Kozeracki, 1998, p. 3).

The learning organization model that has had the most impact on education appears to be based on Peter Senge's five disciplines (1990) which form the foundation for his concept of a learning organization. Senge described a learning organization as "a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality. And how they can change it" (Senge, 1990, p. 13). He identified five disciplines which must be

addressed if organizational learning is to lead to organizational change. These are personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking.

Senge's ideas on systems are the product of decades of systems thinking and research. Capra (1996, p. 36) noted that most of the key criteria of systems thinking were in place by the 1930s as the result of work in the fields of biology, psychology, and ecology. The concepts that were formed then were later reinforced by discoveries made in quantum physics.

Systems thinking is first characterized by a shift in focus from the parts to the whole: "Living systems are integrated wholes whose properties cannot be reduced to those of smaller parts" (Capra, 1996, p. 36). Second, systems have different levels, that is, systems within other systems, and each is unique in its design and complexity. This shift is a fundamental reversal of the Cartesian notion that the behavior of an entire system could be analyzed by studying its parts. Eventually, quantum physics would show that there are no parts at all but what Capra called "merely a pattern in an inseparable web of relationships" (Capra, 1996, p. 37). For systems thinkers, these relationships or networks are of primary importance. Thus, a third characteristic of systems thinking is the metaphor of the network, replacing the older image of knowledge as a building of static foundations and rooms.

Scientific knowledge from the viewpoint of systems thinkers is in constant motion. Physics, long considered the foundation of science, is no more or less important than any other branch of science, for example, biology. This view calls into question the belief that scientific descriptions can be objective. The method of questioning, the

epistemology, becomes central to any theories that are developed. As Capra noted, if all is interconnected and no concept or model is any more fundamental than another, then how can we ever understand anything? If everything is connected to everything else, then "in order to explain any one of them, we need to understand all the others, which is obviously impossible" (Capra, 1996, p. 41). The solution lies in an acceptance of a new paradigm that knowledge is always limited and approximate.

> What makes it possible to turn the systems approach into a science is the discovery that there is approximate knowledge. This insight is crucial to all of modern science. The old paradigm is based on the Cartesian belief in the certainty of scientific knowledge. In the new paradigm it is recognized that all scientific concepts and theories are limited and approximate. Science can never provide any complete and definitive understanding. (Capra, 1996, p. 41)

A final point is that all these characteristics are combined in a thought process that is described as both contextual and process oriented. As Capra noted, "In systems science every structure is seen as the manifestation of underlying processes. Systems thinking is always process thinking" (Capra, 1996, p 42). These elements form the foundation for the work of theorists such as Hardin (1961), Forrester (1969), and Kauffman (1980), from whom Senge acknowledged he culled his five disciplines (Senge, 1990, p. 394). In *The Fifth Discipline*, Senge defined learning organizations as those which constantly recreate themselves.

As Senge has noted, however, awareness alone is not sufficient to make substantive change. Organizations must master and employ specific skills and attitudes to think and act systemically. He identified five disciplines that must all be mastered if an organization is to truly "learn" and achieve the ability to continually enhance its

capacity and to recreate itself. These five disciplines, or "component technologies," are systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision, and team learning. Systems thinking, the fifth discipline and the one which integrates the others, has been outlined above. The other four disciplines are briefly defined as follows:

Personal mastery is the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively. It is the "spiritual foundation" of a learning organization (Senge, 1990, p.7). Senge noted that personal mastery is important because it involves the reciprocal commitments between an individual and the organization, and between individual learning and organizational learning.

Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action. Mental models are important to identify and scrutinize in order to "balance inquiry and advocacy, where people expose their own thinking effectively and make that thinking open to the influence of others" (Senge, 1990, p. 9). Without such awareness, said Senge, learning cannot take place.

Building shared vision is the process of binding people together around a common identity and a sense of destiny. Senge distinguished genuine vision from a vision statement that too often results in compliance rather than commitment.

Team learning, the final discipline, is vital because teams, not individuals, are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations. For Senge, the discipline of team

learning begins with dialogue from the Greek *dia-logos*, which means a free-flowing of thinking through a group.

Senge noted that to practice these disciplines is as much a personal endeavor as an organizational one, that people have to be lifelong learners because the essence of a learning organization is that one never "arrives." "You can never say, 'We are a learning organization,' any more than you can say, 'I am an enlightened person'. . . As the disciplines converge, they do not produce a final product but "a new wave of experimentation and advancement" (Senge, 1990, p. 11).

The concept of life-long or continual learning is fundamental to the essence of a learning organization. From Senge's point of view, the most accurate term for what takes place in a learning organization is another Greek word, *meta-noia*, which means a shift of mind. "To grasp the meaning of 'metanoia' is to grasp the deeper meaning of 'learning,' for learning also involves a fundamental shift or movement of mind" (Senge, 1990, p. 13). Learning is not merely absorbing information.

> This, then, is the basic meaning of a "learning organization" – an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future . . . "adaptive (survival) learning" is important – indeed it is necessary. But for a learning organization, "adaptive learning" must be joined by "generative learning," learning that enhances our capacity to create. (Senge, 1990, p. 14)

What does it mean when a learning institution commits to becoming a learning organization? In a 1995 interview on schools as learning organizations, Senge discussed the application of his principles to education, beginning with the assertion that institutions of learning are not automatically learning organizations (O'Neil, 1995). For

Senge, most adult learning, for example, staff development programs, focuses on the individual. Staff development programs do not necessarily enhance the organization's collective capacity to create and pursue a vision. While conferences may be of value, in Senge's opinion, real learning can only take place on the job, "in the context where [the teacher is] taking action" (O'Neil, 1995). Even so, schools are not typically organized to support collective learning. They are complex and very stratified organizations embedded within even more complex communities. Knowledge is fragmented into very specialized areas, and teaching is a highly individual activity. Educators are likely to feel disempowered, not having sufficient leverage to make change in such a complex system.

Nonetheless, Senge believed education has at least one asset upon which it can successfully capitalize. Its employees tend to have a "sense of personal purpose and deep caring" (O'Neil, 1995). The difficulty lies in taking advantage of this commitment. Senge suggested two possibilities. One is to create an environment in which educators can reflect. A second way is to bring educators together so that their "individual visions can start to interact" and create a "field of shared meaning" (O'Neil, 1995). He cautioned that this is a long process, not an event, and yet that is how learning activities for staff are usually constructed and presented – in sporadic and disconnected retreats and workshops. "We fail to capture the imagination and commitment of the [faculty] learner in the way any real learning process must" (O'Neil, 1995).

While Senge asserted that there is nothing in any of the five disciplines that would make them inherently less suitable for education than business, he acknowledged some validity to educators' skepticism about the application of business concepts and

terminology to education. From Senge's perspective, because of its multiple constituencies and because its product is human beings capable of lifelong learning, education presents a greater challenge than business in terms of innovation. However, he observed:

> You can make pretty compelling arguments that systems thinking, building a shared vision, dialogue, and learning how to reflect on our mental models are, at some level, educational undertakings more than business undertakings. (O'Neil, 1995)

Moving from Senge's concept of a learning organization to O'Banion's concept of a learning college, O'Banion identified six key principles upon which such an organization is based. Note that he used the more inclusive term "learners," not "students." These six principles form the core of the learning college.

Table 3

Principles of the Learning College

1. The learning college creates substantive change in individual learners.
2. The learning college engages learners in the learning process as full partners, assuming primary responsibility for their own choices.
3. The learning college creates and offers as many options for learning as possible.
4. The learning college assists learners to form and participate in collaborative learning activities.
5. The learning college defines the roles of learning facilitators by the needs of the learners.
6. The learning college and its learning facilitators succeed only when improved and expanded learning can be documented for its learners.

From Creating More Learning-Centered Community Colleges (p. 20), by T. O'Banion, 1997a, The League for Innovation in the Community College.

O'Banion acknowledged that among the challenges of creating a learning-centered college is that such an entity is often confused with a learning organization. There is a difference. He noted, "In some ways a learning organization is designed for the staff of the institution, while a learning-centered institution is designed for the students" (O'Banion, 1997a, p. 26). A learning organization will not necessarily produce a learning-centered institution, but according to O'Banion, the concepts of a learning organization provide "a powerful foundation on which to build a learning-centered institution" (O'Banion, 1997a, p. 26).

Also fundamental to Senge's model is information, which should be available and accessible to all members of the learning organization. There is doubtless little coincidence in the fact that systems thinking, the learning revolution, and the Information Age have emerged simultaneously. Because information plays such a key role in these phenomena, and because information poses a special challenge to institutions of higher education, it is important to understand the Information Age and its impact on higher education.

The Information Age

The transition or revolution from the Industrial Age with its precise divisions of labor, its assembly line mentality, and its reductionist approach to problem solving to the Information Age is well documented (Bass, 1990; Bennis & Biederman, 1997; Bergquist, 1993; Drucker, 1995; Naisbett & Aburdene, 1990; Pinchot & Pinchot, 1994; Rowley,

Lujan & Dolence, 1997; Wheatley, 1992; Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996). The Information Age is a term that has become commonplace as business, industry, government, and education attempt to explain the revolution that is occurring within the workplace.

> This revolution is evidenced by the rapidly changing distribution of the work force in the United States. In 1920, 9 percent of the work force was engaged in knowledge and educational services; in 1955, 29 percent; and in 1975, 50 percent. In 2000, it is estimated that 66 percent of the work force will be involved in such services. (Bass, 1990, p. 881)

It is a revolution that is changing our most fundamental concepts of the nature of work, the worker, and the kind of management and leadership needed to support an information-based workplace.

Among the explanations for the shift from an industrial to an information model is Drucker's proposition (1995, p. 76) that the shift to a knowledge[1] society in the United States was the result primarily of the passage of the GI Bill of Rights after World War II. There was an unprecedented response to the educational opportunities provided by the bill, an influx of students whose sheer numbers and diversity had significant and long-term impact on the country's higher education system as well as the workplace. There were other causes as well, most notably the shift from forced technology to high tech/high-touch technology, the shift from a national to a global economy, and the shift

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[1] *Information* and *knowledge* are often used as synonyms, though some draw a distinction. For example, Webster's *New World Dictionary* states that *information* is not *knowledge*, which implies some level of understanding, nor is it *wisdom*, which implies superior judgment A sequential relationship is implied in the notion that the Knowledge Age will follow the Information Age. Drucker went further to claim that the proper term is not *knowledge* but *knowledges*, which exist only in application (Drucker, 1995, p. 237).

from the models and metaphors of physics to those of biology (Naisbett & Aburdene, 1990).

But what exactly is meant by *information* in this context, and what makes it different from any other resource? According to Webster's *New World Dictionary*, *information* applies to facts or data that are gathered in any number of ways, but information does not necessarily connote validity. It may be helpful to state what information is not. *Information* is not *knowledge*, which implies some level of understanding, and it is not *wisdom*, which implies superior judgment.

> Data isn't information, any more than fifty tons of cement is a skyscraper. . . . Most important, information is not knowledge. . . . Our networks are awash in data. A little of it's information. A smidgen of this shows up as knowledge. Combined with ideas, some of that is actually useful. Mix in experience, context, compassion, discipline, humor, tolerance, and humility, and perhaps knowledge becomes wisdom. (Stoll, 1995, p. 193)

Cleveland (1985) identified six properties of information. First, information is expandable. Only time and capacity of people limit its growth. "Information is unique as a resource because of its capacity to generate itself" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 105).

Second, information is compressible. It requires little energy and the depletion of few physical resources. A single CD ROM can easily contain an entire encyclopedia of information, plus the programming necessary to access it.

Third, information can replace land, labor, and capital. Drucker (1995, p. 76) asserted that information does not really replace these traditional economic factors. Rather, it makes them secondary.

Fourth, information is transportable. Information can be transported electronically or carried in a 3-1/2" diskette. It can be duplicated, replicated, and manipulated by nearly anyone with access to increasingly available and affordable equipment. Even more basic, however, is the fact that specialized information is really "capital" which "belongs to the employee and not to the organization . . .and are carried by her to her next job" (Bergquist, 1993, p. 154).

Fifth, information is diffusive. It leaks. In some contexts, the fact that information leaks can be damaging, even fatal. However, for a system or organization to remain vital and alive, information, both external and internal, must be accessible. "This is very different from the more traditional organizational response to information" (Wheatley, 1992, pp. 91).

Finally, information is shareable. According to Bennis and Biederman, sharing information is an essential characteristic of great groups – creative alliances of individuals who together, are able to achieve more than any single member could by him- or herself (Bennis & Biederman, 1997, p. 3).

Expandable, compressible, replaceable, transportable, diffusive, shareable. These terms connote action. According to Wheatley (1992), one of the heretofore unrecognized characteristics of information is its dynamic nature.

> What we were all suffering from, then and now, is a fundamental misperception of information: what it is, how it works, and what we might expect from it. The nub of the problem is that we've treated information as a "thing," as an inert entity to disseminate. . . . This "thing" view of information arose from several decades of information theory that treated information as a quantity, as "bits" to be transmitted and received. Information was a commodity to transfer from one place

> to another. The content, meaning, and purpose of information were ignored; they were not part of the theoretical construct. . . . I believe it is information theory that has gotten us into trouble. We don't understand information at all. . . . We expected information to be controllable, stable, and useful for our purposes. We expected to be able to manage it. (Wheatley, 1992, pp. 101-102)

New theories about systems and order do not view information as a commodity. It is considered to be "both the underlying structure and the dynamic process that ensure life" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 102). Wheatley is perhaps the most eloquent of the systems theorists on this point. While information may be an outcome, it is also a cause. As information changes, so should the system. If the system does not change in response to new information, or "if the information...merely confirms what is, then the result will be death. Isolated systems wind down and decay, victims of the law of entropy" (Wheatley, 1992, pp. 104-105). Thus, the effectiveness of an organization is determined by how well it transmits, verifies, and uses data (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993, p. 146).

Wheatley proposed that if information is the fundamental ingredient of the process by which structures and systems are created, it can only serve this purpose if organizations are themselves living entities with the same dynamics as open systems. "A key question, then, is are organizations alive? Are they conscious, responsive entities?" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 106). Wheatley defined a conscious system as one with the capacity to deal with information and to communicate. She reasoned that anything capable of organizing itself possesses some level of consciousness. She concluded that organizations qualify as conscious entities for whom the continual genesis and communication of information are vital to their health. It becomes impossible to discuss organizations without acknowledging the central function of information. "There is an

implicit relationship between information, understanding, work culture, and the quality (or excellence) of the output" (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993, p. 146).

It is easy to understand why the management of information is such an important consideration from this perspective, though Wheatley would argue that "information is managing us" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 104). Whichever is more accurate, the ways in which organizations value information, communicate it, and use it are critical to their well being.

Managing information – or being managed by it – poses some significant challenges. First, there must be a shift in attitude toward information. It is still true that information is power, but it is no longer true that controlling information is in the best interests of the organization.

> In fact, the greatest generator of information is chaos. . . .Of course, this is exactly what we fear. Our management task is to enforce control, to keep information contained, to pass it down in such a way that no procreation occurs. Information chastity belts are a central management function. (Wheatley, 1992, p. 105)

Second, information must be collected, measured, and disseminated. To be sure, there are considerable technical challenges to creating and maintaining an effective information system. Technology has made the Information Age possible, but technology is extremely dynamic and can be expensive to both acquire and maintain. But, as Pinchot and Pinchot (1994, p. 89) noted, "Creating a system open to a free flow of information and ideas is not primarily a technical challenge; it is a political one." What information is collected, when and where it is disseminated, and most importantly, by and to whom, are

powerful decisions and, in fact, often tend to drive decisions about technology rather than the other way around.

There is another important aspect to the dissemination and application of information. Once applied, the effects of the information may not be known for a very long time. "Improvements are usually gradual, incremental, and long-term, and systems of measurement must be able to pick up this gradual improvement" (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993. p. 46). If members of the organization are not kept apprised of the progress, if there is sporadic or no follow-up, there is no sense that the endeavor is worthwhile and no way to learn anything new from the outcomes.

Third, managing the volume and flow of information is challenging. It often seems that it is either feast or famine with information. There is either not enough reliable information for decision-making, or there is far more than can be handled.

> Here we sit in the Information Age, besieged by more information than any mind can handle, trying to make sense of the complexity that continues to grow around us. Is information anything more than a new and perplexing management tool? . . . In organizations, we aren't suffering from information overload just because of technology, and we won't get out from under our information dilemmas just by using more sophisticated information-sorting techniques. . . . However long we may drag our feet, we will be forced to accept that information – freely generated and freely exchanged, – is our only hope for organization. (Wheatley, 1992, p. 145)

Of the two predicaments, it is probably preferable to have more information than not enough, because "no one knows what information an individual will choose to notice" (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996, p. 82). Limited information restricts people's capacity to discover something new. One caveat is that the available

information needs to be reliable and relevant. Otherwise, the danger exists that we "limit our explorations of what's possible by surrounding ourselves with large amounts of information that tell us nothing new" (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996, p. 26). Another caveat is that information has a very short shelf life.

> Today, the time span for useful information is considerably shorter than that of human life, and, therefore, individuals must constantly prepare to stay informed. Half of all the information available at any point in time will become obsolete within 10 years. (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993, p. 48)

Finally, it is the central challenge of any organization to ensure that its members not only have access to information but be able to make use of it. "You might even say that knowledge not acted upon is worthless" (Pinchot & Pinchot, 1994, p. 85). Workers need general knowledge, but general knowledge alone is not enough. As Drucker has observed, it is really a question of multiple knowledges which exist only in application and therefore are by definition highly specialized forms of knowledge. Such specialized knowledge can be obtained only through experience and education. Education "will become the center of the knowledge society and schooling its key institution" (Drucker, 1995, p. 234). In fact, the definition of an educated person will change from the traditional concept of a person who has acquired a prescribed body of knowledge to "somebody who has learned how to learn and who throughout his or her lifetime continues learning, and especially learning in and through formal education" (Drucker, 1995, p. 235).

Organizations dependent upon specialists have the need to ensure that systems are in place to encourage and facilitate communication among specialists, for as Drucker

noted, "By itself, specialized knowledge yields no performance. In the knowledge society it is not the individual who performs. The individual is a cost center rather than a performance center. It is the organization that performs" (Drucker, 1995, p. 242). The challenge lies in acknowledging the need for specialization yet organizing in such a way that collaboration across the specialties or disciplines is possible.

> As large organizations enter the information age, a similar transition is taking place in the way they are structured. A business enters the information age when the interconnections needed overwhelm any conceivable bureaucratic structure. Knowledge workers create this situation, because to use their brains effectively they have to cross boundaries and freely collaborate. However the organization is divided, huge volumes of collaboration are needed across the divisions. . . .As successes in interdepartmental cooperation grow, we will discover that in a systems thinking age, the bulk of opportunities lie not within single departments but in the interaction between departments. Organization by department underexploits anything that falls between. (Pinchot & Pinchot, 1994, pp. 112-113)

The ability to work across disciplines is essential, since knowledge workers who are specialists must be able to work in teams. The organization has a responsibility to provide its employees with the skills required for effective collaboration. Employees "must learn – and learn early – how to assimilate into their own work specialized knowledges from other areas and other disciplines" (Drucker, 1995, p. 239).

There are some special challenges for learning organizations with respect to information and knowledge. First, as noted above, employees need to learn how to work across the disciplines as well as across occupational roles. This is not easily accomplished in colleges traditionally organized by disciplines. Second, employees own the knowledge, the capital. When they leave, their information and knowledge go with

them. This means that organizations are increasingly reliant upon individual employees and may find that there is a very competitive market for their services. "Thus, the only power many leaders of postmodern organizations hold over their key employees is psychological (rather than economic or positional) in nature" (Bergquist, 1993, p. 154).

Keeping in mind that information is power, Drucker warned of a third challenge – the generation of a new kind of class conflict: "the conflict between the large minority of knowledge workers and the majority of people who will make their living the traditional ways" (Drucker, 1995, pp. 235-236). Drucker went on to say that the productivity of the knowledge worker will be an economic challenge in the future, but the productivity of manual and service workers will be the social challenge. His prophecy is coming true in at least one economic region in California: Silicon Valley. In a recent futures report, a community task force cited the growing disparity between the skills and potential earning power of groups of citizens as a major threat to the continued economic and social stability of the region (Henton et. al, 1998).

Fourth, it is not enough to give people access to information. They must have the freedom to act upon it. Thus, organizations must decentralize decision-making and empower employees to make changes based on the data available to them. To create and maintain such an environment becomes the particular challenge for management, which must learn to look beyond procedure toward productivity. According to Drucker (1995), "the essence of management is to make knowledges [sic] productive. . . . Management, in other words, is a social function" (Drucker, 1995, pp. 249-250). Senge also stressed that learning organizations must increasingly become "localized," meaning that the

maximum degree of authority is extended as far from the top as possible in order to improve people's capacity to create, experiment, and produce (Senge, 1990, pp. 287-288).

Higher education has a dual interest in the subject of information systems. Given the need to develop lifelong learning skills among highly specialized workers, colleges and universities will need to be able to provide relevant and accessible training not only in the technical skills required for information management systems, but also in workplace skills such as collaboration, team building, and communication.

> The twenty-first century will require higher education to accommodate to the Information Age. We can predict learning, knowledge, and scholarship will all be changed in this era. (Mellow, 1996, p. 15)

Colleges and universities are also organizations themselves and highly complex ones. Although culturally different from corporations, their need for information and information systems is no less than that of corporations.

> Universities contrast greatly with mainline utilitarian organizations and have been described as organized anarchies. . . universities are likely to have problematic goals, unclear technologies, and fluid participation in decision making. Inertia is high in universities. Most issues are of little consequence to the members as a whole, and decisions depend on who happens to be involved at the time they have to be made. There is a weak base of information available. Effective leadership requires managing unobtrusively, providing arenas for discussing a wide variety of problems, facilitating the participation of opposing points of view, and persisting in attempts to accomplish objectives despite the inertia. (Bass, 1990, p. 577)

In *The Four Cultures of the Academy*, Bergquist (1992) identified four different academic cultures: the collegial, the managerial, the negotiating, and the developmental.

The collegial culture is one that finds meaning primarily in the disciplines represented by the faculty in the institutions. The managerial culture finds meaning mainly in the organization, implementation, and evaluation of work that is directed toward specified goals and purposes. The developmental culture finds meaning mostly in the creation of programs and activities furthering the personal and professional growth of all members of the collegiate community. The negotiating culture is one that finds meaning primarily in the establishment of equitable and egalitarian policies and procedures for the distribution of resources and benefits to the institution.

All four cultures exist simultaneously and interdependently, according to Bergquist, but one is usually predominant. Those institutions of higher education that have embraced the concept of the learning college would be considered primarily developmental cultures. The need for information exists for all four cultures, but especially for the developmental. In a developmental culture, all members should have access to the maximum amount of information.

> Information is inherently valuable to individuals and organizations, according to the developmentalists. They believe that only through the introduction of new information that somehow calls into question an individual's or organization's current self perceptions will "unfreezing" take place, as a precondition to real learning and change. Information is similarly required to preserve authenticity in relationships. . . . Information about one's own behavior, according to the developmentalists, is essential if one is to continue to mature and become more successful in organizational settings. (Bergquist, 1992, p. 117)

If we accept Bergquist's model as an accurate description of the academic environment, it is clear that in the area of information and information systems, colleges

must first be cognizant of their own culture in order to determine how information can be managed most effectively.

This task is further complicated by the fact that the information available in most colleges and universities is "weak," and the technology to support it is "unclear" (Bass, 1990, p. 577). It is not that colleges do not collect data; most have extensive data bases that contain years of data about students, finances, curriculum, and personnel. Yet, they are "both information-rich and information-impoverished" (Joyce & Calhoun, 1996). What colleges frequently lack are the resources – money, state-of-the-art equipment, and personnel – to retrieve data, disseminate it in an accessible form, and analyze it systematically (Lashway, 1998). Moreover, even if they have the programming and research support to access the information, colleges often lack the ability to link the data with their planning processes, making double-loop learning[2] nearly impossible.

In spite of the inadequacies inherent in most educational institutions' ability to manage information, colleges have entered a new era of accountability. The 1990s could be referred to as the Age of Accountability, or at least the call for accountability (Stark & Lattuca, 1997, p. 73). One example of increased expectations in this area is the substantial revision of accreditation standards for community colleges by the Accrediting Commission for Junior and Community Colleges (ACJCC). In 1997, ACJCC implemented new accreditation standards. The main change that appeared throughout every standard was the requirement that colleges not only have the systems in place to

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[2] Argyris and Schön (1981) defined double-loop learning as learning which leads to a change in behavior. It is contrasted with single-loop learning, which does not result in significant change.

measure institutional effectiveness, but that those systems generate data that are actually used to improve programs and services. Thus, assessment and evaluation have become the cornerstones of institutional planning efforts. As Stark and Lattuca noted, society has always emphasized accountability to some degree and in some manner, whether to justify funding or to assert quality control as a means of slowing and refocusing curricular change – that is, to "correct" the course of the colleges (Stark & Lattuca, 1997, pp. 73-74). However, in spite of longstanding expectations of accountability, higher education's mechanisms for evaluation and adjustment have remained "idiosyncratic and unsystematic" (Stark & Lattuca, 1997, p. 45). Colleges talk a great deal about the importance of data-based decision-making, but relatively little occurs (Rowley et al., 1997, p. 248).

For California community colleges in the 1990s, the demand for accountability from numerous external sources has resulted in an attempt to become more systematic about measuring effectiveness. In *Embracing the Tiger: The Effectiveness Debate and the Community College*, Roueche et al. (1997) noted that community colleges are more exposed than the 4-year, "ivy-covered" institutions. They are even less able than 4-year colleges and universities to ascribe the problem to poor public relations (Roueche et al., 1997, pp. 4-5). One result of the push toward accountability has been a reexamination of the infrastructure of the community college system. O'Banion (1997b) stressed that no meaningful improvement in student outcomes and institutional effectiveness can occur without significant changes in the system itself.

What may have the most impact, however, is California's adoption of a performance-based funding model for a portion (3%) of the state appropriation to community colleges. Called "Partnership for Excellence," this legislation requires the system to show reasonable improvement in areas such as transfer rate and the granting of degrees and certificates. This is a major challenge for the system's 106 colleges. Although the legislature has agreed to accept systemwide data (vs. data by individual college), this still requires colleges to institute data collection and research activities at the most basic level – the classroom. This will be the greatest challenge for educational managers. They must educate a faculty largely untrained in andragogical (adult learning) principles and research methodologies to conduct classroom-based assessment, learn to analyze the results, and systematically adjust methodologies to improve performance – of their students, of their departments, and finally, of the college as a whole.

In summary, colleges will need to understand the Information Age and its significance for higher education especially in terms of renewed emphasis on strategic planning and student outcomes. To ensure that reliable information is available whenever and to whomever it is necessary requires that colleges realign their institutions with external and internal changes and expectations (Rowley et al., 1997, p. 309).

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW: ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING, FACULTY DEVELOPMENT, AND FACULTY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

O'Banion (1997b) made a point of encouraging staff development as a means of preparing faculty and staff to become more learning-centered. In fact, there is a substantial body of literature that addresses adult learning, faculty as learners, and the role of professional development in both enhancing teaching skills and preparing faculty and staff to be active participants in a learning organization. "Learning [is] the bridge between working and innovating" (Brown & Duguid, 1996, p. 60). This section describes some of the key factors in adult development and learning as the basis for a discussion about faculty as learners in the context of professional development.

> Typically. . . colleges and universities fail to acknowledge the developmental nature of faculty careers. They maintain basically the same expectations and apply the same policies to all professors, regardless of their age or career stage. . . and in so doing they forego important opportunities to fashion policies that could benefit faculty members and their institutions. (Baldwin, 1990, pp. 20-21)

Underlying any discussion about professional development are assumptions about adult development and learning. Tennant and Pogson (1995, p. 1) cited two domains of theory and research about adult development: (1) intellectual or cognitive functioning and (2) development of the personality and social roles. Regarding the cognitive domain, they noted that initially there were two models. One – the stability model – concluded that after reaching maturity, cognition remains the same, and there is no significant

change throughout the adult years. The second – the decrement model – suggested that adults experience a gradual decrease in their cognitive abilities, perhaps as the result of the biological effects of aging. However, Tennant and Pogson (1995) noted that contemporary theory rejects both models and asserted that there is continued cognitive development throughout the adult years.

Baldwin (1990) also noted that contemporary development theorists portray adulthood as a "variegated and dynamic phase of life" (Baldwin, 1990, p. 21). Along with Tennant and Pogson, Baldwin cited the work of theorists such as Erikson (1963), who defined adult years in terms of three sequential objectives: intimacy (young adult), generativity (core adult years), and ego integrity (late adulthood). Also influential is the work of Levinson (1978), who described the adult years as a series of alternating stable and transitional periods which are repeated regularly, though no one cycle is ever exactly like another. Loevinger (1976) and Gould (1978) stressed the importance of separating adult selves from childhood consciousness, reinforcing the notion that adult development not only occurs but is distinctly different from childhood development. This is a concept which is fundamental to the distinction between pedagogy and andragogy as learning theories.

Schuster and Wheeler (1990) and Tennant and Pogson (1995) noted that there are objections to aspects of adult development theory. For example, Schuster and Wheeler considered Levinson's developmental model too rigidly sequenced and noted criticism of his research for its small sample, which was limited to men and did not account for women or other groups (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 23). In spite of these objections,

they and others confirmed that there is a sufficient body of research in the area of adult development to conclude that neither the stability nor the decrement models are applicable to adult development. Rather, adults are engaged in cycles of cognitive development throughout their lives, thus providing a foundation for research into adult learning.

Adult Learning

The term *andragogy* is defined as the art or science of leading adult learning and was first used by a German educator, Alexander Kapp, in 1833 (Ingalls, 1972). It is distinct from *pedagogy*, even though the distinction is much less recognized by American educators than it is by their European counterparts. There is a considerable body of research devoted to adult learning, including the work of Brookfield (1987), Cross (1981), Houle (1992), Ingalls (1972), Knowles (1980, 1984a), Knowles and Associates (1984b), Knowles, Holton and Swanson (1998), Merriam & Caffarella (1991), Mezirow (1991), and Vaughan (1972). Adult learning research is based on Piaget's four stages of childhood cognitive development: sensory-motor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational. The last stage, formal operational or the ability to think abstractly, is reached between the ages of 15 and 20, according to Piaget (1952, 1972).

Although Piaget's work focused entirely on children, he nonetheless made several important contributions to adult learning theory. These included an emphasis on qualitative rather than quantitative developmental changes, the concept that active

learning is more meaningful than passive learning, and the concept that mature adult thought exists (Tennant, 1988, p. 77).

There is not widespread agreement that adults and children learn differently, but there does seem to be concurrence that adult learners need different conditions than children if learning is to be successful. Ingalls (1972) described four concepts which help to differentiate between pedagogy and andragogy.

The first is self-concept. There is a significant difference between pedagogy and andragogy in terms of the student-teacher relationship. Pedagogy implies a dominant teacher/dependent student relationship; andragogy implies a more equal and reciprocal relationship.

The second concept is experience. Compared to adults, children have little experience. "Experience is what happens *to* them" (Ingalls, 1972). Thus, pedagogical methods are largely one-directional, from teacher to learner. For adults, who have considerably more experience upon which to draw, the most effective relationship is multi-directional and takes place within a learning community where the experiences of both teacher and students are equally valued.

Third is readiness to learn. "The main task of pedagogical curriculum development lies in dealing with sequencing and interrelating of subjects and skill-building activities to meet the requirements of competency for graduation" (Ingalls, 1972). The teacher is responsible for both the content and the process for children who are grouped by grade and class. In andragogy, on the other hand, the adult learners are

the ones who identify their interests and their needs with the help of a teacher/facilitator who provides a structure which supports a self-directed learning approach.

The fourth concept is time perspective and orientation to learning. Children spend their educational years storing up bits and pieces of knowledge which, they are assured, will someday be useful. Graduation is a kind of "rite of passage" from the learning world into the "doing world" with the strong implication that after graduation, the learning world is left behind (Ingalls, 1972). In andragogy, the approach is more problem-centered rather than subject-centered. The emphasis is on the action of learning by doing, preferably within a real-life context. Ingalls is careful to note that this does not mean that andragogy does not value knowledge of the past. Rather it is an acknowledgement that adults are more motivated to learn when they are addressing an immediate need. Moreover, it should be noted that pedagogy in elementary and secondary schools has become increasingly more andragogical with the deliberate introduction of experiential, collaborative, and interactive learning.

There is much in adult learning theory which coincides with the constructivist model (Schön, 1990), p. 36) of teaching and learning based on the following principles described by Glatthorn and Fox (1996, pp. 5-6).

Table 4

The Constructivist Model of Learning

- Learning is an active, meaning-making process. It is not passive and receptive.
- Learning at its best involves conceptual change.
- Learning is always subjective and personal.
- Learning is contextualized.
- Learning is social.
- Learning is affective.
- The nature of the learning task is crucial and should be characterized by relevancy, authenticity, challenge, and novelty.
- Learning is strongly influenced by the learner's development.
- Learning at its best involves metacognition, reflecting on one's learning throughout the entire learning process

From Quality Teaching Through Professional Development (pp. 5-6), by A.Glatthorn and L. Fox, 1996, Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Drawing upon the work of Cross (1981), Knowles et al. (1984b), and Lambert (1984), Glatthorn and Fox (1996) also synthesize what is known about how adults learn into four categories: (a) the structure of the learning experiences, (b) learning climate, (c) focus of learning, and (d) teaching-learning strategies and media. In respect to structure, adult learners prefer flexible schedules, learn better when learning is individualized, prefer face-to-face learning, and derive benefit from heterogeneous classes. As for learning climate, adult learners prefer a climate of mutual helpfulness, are reluctant to take risks, and prefer a climate with a sense of trust and acceptance of differences. They

also want an opportunity to express their views but are open to other opinions. Finally, adults have clear expectations.

In the third category, focus of learning, adult learners prefer teaching that helps them process their experience through reflection, analysis, and critical examination. They value learning that increases their autonomy. They are interested in practical, "how to" learning for immediate application. In respect to strategies and media, the fourth category, adult learners value problem-solving and cooperative learning and desire active participation with constructive feedback (Glatthorn & Fox, 1996, p. 7). What is known about adult development and adult learning provides a basis upon which to examine career development and learning for faculty.

Faculty Development

Fundamentally, the stages of a teaching career are no different from those of careers in general. Citing the work of Voydanoff (1980), Schuster and Wheeler noted that

> most careers progress from an initial entry and establishment period to a period of growth and advancement. Eventually, careers cease to expand; they level off to a stable plateau in a maintenance stage. Finally, they move into a disengagement phase. (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 24)

Identifiable stages of the typical career include career entry (a time of learning and socialization), early career (a time of continued learning and career advancement), mid-career (the period of maximum productivity but also of reevaluation), and late career (a

time of concluding one's career and preparing for retirement). There is also an important phenomenon known as career plateauing, "a stage in work or life where there is no growth or movement" (Bardwick, 1986, p. vii). According to Bardwick, there are two types of plateauing: structural and content. Structural plateauing occurs as a result of an organization's hierarchical limits on advancement and is common among "flat" organizations such as universities and colleges. Content plateauing, the more serious of the two, occurs when an employee has mastered the work, and there is nothing new to learn. Schuster and Wheeler observed that plateauing is common in the academic profession and can negatively affect productivity (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, pp. 26-27).

In all discussions of career development, it is important to remember that there are many variables as well as considerable individual and group differences. Different disciplines have different dynamics, for example, as do different types of educational institutions. Gender and ethnicity are other sources of variation. While major career events may be the same irrespective of gender or ethnicity, the timing of those events for women and men may be very different and occur at markedly different stages of adult development (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 31). Women, for example, may delay career entry until mid-life, after they have raised their children.

Burke, Heideman, and Heideman (1990), Freedman et al. (1979), Glatthorn and Fox (1996), and Schuster and Wheeler (1990) are among the theorists who have investigated career development for faculty in relation to adult development and learning theory. "Most academic careers begin near the end of Levinson's early adult era and continue until the transition into late adulthood" (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 22).

Schuster and Wheeler noted that it is possible to develop a sequential model of an academic career taking into account adult developmental theory and career developmental models. They identified the following stages, again with the caveat that "no two academic careers are identical, and professors deserve to be treated as the talented *individuals* they are" (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 38).

Huberman (1989) ascribed a certain range of years to each period. The stage of novice professor is a period of intense pressure and growth during which the new professor's major concern is competence. Huberman called this period career entry, from the first to the third year. It is followed by the early academic career stage, a period of settling down and making a name. This is a highly stressful period for junior faulty members who are working toward tenure. Depending upon the stage of adult development with which this period coincides, for example young adulthood, it may also include the stresses of establishing a family and a home. Huberman called this period the stabilization period, which lasts 4 to 6 years.

As with careers in general, the mid-career stage is a very productive period but one in which the faculty member is faced with choosing to accept a career plateau (or at least wondering what to do with the rest of his/her professional life) or to set new goals. Huberman assigned those with 7 to 18 years of experience into this category and also noted the potential for divergence, either toward experimentation and renewal or toward reassessment. He identified a second period of divergence between years 19 and 30, a time of either self-acceptance or conservatism and entrenchment. Mid-career is followed by the final stage, late career. For faculty, this can be a paradoxical time characterized by

feelings of great satisfaction and gratification as well as feelings of isolation and neglect, which can culminate in ambivalence and anxiety. According to Huberman, this final period occurs between 31 and 40 years of experience.

Freedman et al. (1979) proposed a 5-stage developmental scheme from a psychological perspective, building upon the work of Loevinger and Wessler (1970) and Perry (1970), among others. It should be noted that among faculty, there are many individual differences, some of which can be attributed to the effects of different disciplines and the observation by Feldman and Newcomb (1969) that these differences are probably due to accentuation or the fact that certain fields over time attract people with certain traits (Freedman et al., 1979, p. 102).

The scheme proposed by Freedman et al. has five stages. In Stage 1, faculty members have a simple view of their role and the nature of their work as defined by their professional reference group. Knowledge is seen as absolute; students are empty vessels waiting to assimilate a body of knowledge. At Stage 2, faculty have a more differentiated notion of their role and a more complex view of knowledge. They are more interested in how students learn. In Stage 3, faculty exhibit more distance from their reference group. They focus on creating optimum learning conditions for students and take a problematic view of knowledge. They are more open to choice and diversity. Faculty in Stage 4 have

a sense of freedom and relativity and have evolved a personal way of functioning. They stress synthesis in learning, and although they value students' autonomy, diversity, and complexity, they tend to be slightly more structured in their teaching than those in Stages 1 through 3. Finally, at Stage 5, faculty are more tolerant, better able to live with diversity. They can exhibit and accept great cognitive complexity.

Professional development for faculty must take into account not only their developmental stages and learning preferences as adults, but also their developmental stages as faculty. There may or may not be congruence between the two depending upon when the faculty member enters the teaching profession. Thus, faculty development is a complex process if it is created and implemented properly.

Schuster and Wheeler asserted that faculty competence and vitality have been of concern since universities were first established. Eble and McKeachie traced professional development in American higher education back to the establishment of sabbatical leaves at Harvard in 1810 (Eble & McKeachie, 1985, p. 5). However, professional development for faculty received little systematic attention until the mid-1960s, nor was there much produced during that period in the way of literature about professional development (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 5).

The 1970s saw significant change in faculty development programs for a number of reasons: declining and changing enrollment patterns, increased requirements for accountability, declining financial resources, and an adversely affected faculty (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 5). Schuster and Wheeler noted the proliferation of research during this time, especially that of Bergquist and Phillips (1975, 1979), as well as the

development of national associations devoted to faculty development. Cohen and Brawer (1982) observed that demand for faculty in-service in the community colleges also increased in the 1970s as the expansion of the colleges began to slow, and fewer new faculty were being hired. Thus, colleges had to ensure that existing faculty were in step with new priorities (Cohen & Brawer, 1982, p. 79). However, even though the field of faculty development matured, campus programs continued to be narrowly conceived and narrowly implemented, not systematic and integrated (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990). Burke, Heideman, and Heideman also noted that "professional development has historically been limited in terms of amount, quality, and organization" (Burke, et al. 1990, p. 120). For community college faculty, preferred forms of professional development were paid sabbatical leaves and opportunities to earn higher degrees in their disciplines. Community college administrators, on the other hand, preferred on-campus workshops that focused on pedagogy and collegewide issues (Cohen & Brawer, 1982, p. 79).

Today, faculty development must be considered in light of changes that have occurred in the faculty condition in the last two decades. Schuster and Wheeler (1990) disavowed the current contention that faculty are in crisis and that American higher education is coming undone, though they acknowledged that higher education has been buffeted by trends which have made educators' jobs much more difficult. They described eight megatrends that affect faculty development today.

Table 5

Megatrends in Faculty Development

- Working conditions for faculty have deteriorated.
- Despite recent, modest gain, compensation for faculty has faded overall since the 1970s.
- The academic labor market has been inhospitable to most faculty members.
- Faculty often find themselves caught in a crossfire of conflicting expectations.
- The faculty are congealing – growing older and more "tenured in."
- Shifting values on campuses leave considerable numbers of faculty members feeling frustrated and undervalued.
- Compressed career ladders in academe have often been criticized as inhibitors to motivation.
- Faculty morale has not been good.

From Enhancing Faculty Careers: Strategies for Development and Renewal (pp. 7-11), by J. Schuster and D.Wheeler, 1990, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Two other conditions must be considered along with these megatrends. They are increased faculty diversity and what Schuster and Wheeler called *bipolarity* – a faculty characterized simultaneously by relatively young and old cohorts to an unprecedented extent (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 12). As Baldwin and Blackburn (1983) observed, colleges have too many faculty at the wrong age, in the wrong stage of their careers, or in the wrong fields (those with declining enrollments). They acknowledged that, to some extent, colleges will always experience some disjuncture in trying to match student demand with institutional resources. Given the length of a faculty member's career, usually spent in one or two colleges, the management of human resources becomes critical to a college's organizational health (Baldwin & Blackburn, 1983, p. 7). These

two conditions – increased diversity and bipolarity – pose significant challenges to universities and colleges.

To the conditions mentioned above, one can add mission confusion (Alfano, 1993, p. 1). In a presentation on staff development and organizational change, Oromaner noted that staff development at his community college had been affected "by perhaps the most fundamental type of organizational change, reorientation of the mission statement" (Oromaner, 1997, p. 3). Peterson et al. (1997) noted the reemergence of the mission as a critical factor in educational planning but also observed that the development of mission has been mostly superficial and symbolic for colleges and universities. One might add that it has also been mostly confusing as a result of what Chait (1979) called "mission madness," described by Peterson et al. as "a time-consuming development of vague and often meaningless mission statements" (Peterson et al., 1997, pp. 171-174).

Professional development for faculty is based on a number of fundamental assumptions. For example, Jackson (1971) noted that whether change is perceived to be externally or internally driven can affect the kind of staff development model a school adopts (Jackson, 1971, pp. 26-17). If accountability is perceived to be externally driven, it can result in a defect approach – the notion that teachers lack appropriate knowledge and skills, and that it is the purpose of the faculty development program to provide them. If accountability is seen as internally driven, it can result in a growth approach – one in which it is assumed that teaching is complex and multi-faceted, and that there is no such thing as a complete teacher. According to this approach, if there are defects, they are defects of the system, not of the teacher.

Gaff (1976, pp. 17-18) provided additional insight into the assumptions that underlie faculty development. He pulled together the work of Noonan (1972, 1974), Sanford (1971), and others to identify 12 major propositions (Table 6).

Table 6

Twelve Major Propositions Underlying the Concept of Faculty Development

1. Instruction is the primary role of most faculty members, but instructional quality is affected by their performance in other roles
2. Teaching makes demands on the whole personality of the instructor.
3. When offered opportunities to improve their performance, substantial numbers of faculty will accept the offer.
4. When environmental conditions are supportive and non-threatening, an individual's native growth tendencies are elicited.
5. For significant and lasting change in a teacher to occur, his emotions and affections must be engaged as well as his ideas and cognition.
6. Change in an individual requires a challenge to his habit patterns, but it cannot be so strong as to overwhelm him.
7. Faculty members will change when (a) they have knowledge about alternative ways of behaving; (b) they have the belief that change is desirable; (c) they believe that they can change in the desired ways; (d) they receive non-threatening feedback about their own behavior; (e) they are praised, recognized, and rewarded for effectiveness and for improvement.
8. All faculty members, regardless of age, experience, or effectiveness, can develop in many ways. Faculty development is not a remedial concept for poor teachers or underachievers.
9. Each faculty contains many persons with expertise that can be used in a faculty development program.
10. Faculty development is not just an individual matter.
11. Because faculty are part of social groups, it is often important to work with whole departments, colleges, or other units in order to improve the climate for teaching.
12. Not every faculty member needs to be involved in any one program for it to be successful.

From Toward Faculty Renewal (pp. 17-18), by J. G. Gaff, 1976, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Traditional concepts of faculty development are being reexamined in light of changing conditions in the professoriate – notably a dwindling job market, lack of professional mobility, salaries out of step with inflation, ever limited resources, changing student demographics, and public concerns about accountability (Baldwin & Blackburn, 1983, p. 15). Gaff noted that "academic folklore holds that 'a teacher is born, not made,' and that 'teaching is an art, not a science'" (Gaff, 1976, p. 3). The implication is that little can be done to improve professors' teaching skills. The prevailing attitude is "hire good people and get out of their way." Gaff observed that framing such concepts in the negative have reinforced the isolation that characterizes the profession of the classroom teacher, and that makes it difficult for the teacher to collaborate with and benefit from the experiences of colleagues. However, he warned that the new realities of higher education make the "do nothing" approach insufficient, even dangerous (Gaff, 1976, p. 3).

Gaff (1976) described 17 components (see Appendix D, Table 12) to a new conceptual approach to professional development that is decidedly non-empirical. His first component is faculty. Faculty members are the most important educational resource of a college or university. Smith (1983) wrote, "A university is its faculty. The excellence of a university is the excellence of its faculty" (cited in Baldwin & Blackburn, 1983, p. 15). McKeachie noted that in spite of all the constraints in terms of resources, "one major institutional resource still has elasticity – faculty time and energy . . . they are also a resource that is renewable" (McKeachie, 1983, p. 57). Faculty are higher education's "human capital," or in economic terms, "an aggregate of assets that leads to

the production of goods and services" (Lynton, 1984, p. 16). Schuster and Wheeler wrote that "no industry is as dependent on its human capital for excellence as is higher education" (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 59). In 1976, Gaff calculated that by the year 2005-2006, a faculty member who works until age 65 and whose salary increases at the rate of inflation (estimated at 6% per year) will have earned over $1.4 million dollars. Thus, "a tenured faculty member, in crass financial terms, is a very costly commodity," and one which should be protected (Gaff, 1976, pp. 138-139). He quoted Robert de Hart, former president of De Anza Community College in Cupertino, California, as saying, "We must recognize that despite our tremendous investment in buildings and facilities, they are not our most important capital, the staff is" (Gaff, 1976, p. 139). Higher education is a "people" business. Its primary function is to advance learning, a concept which paradoxically often does not apply to the college or university itself.

Sarason (1990) contended that school reform is destined to fail because insufficient attention is paid to the learning needs of teachers.

> From their inception our public schools have never assigned importance to the intellectual, professional, and career needs of their personnel. However the aims of the schools were articulated, there was never any doubt that schools existed for children. . . .It is virtually impossible to create and sustain over time conditions for productive learning for students when they do not exist for teachers. (Sarason, 1990, pp. 144-145)

Schuster and Wheeler (1990) observed that a curious paradox exists with respect to professional development in colleges and universities. While they are "unparalleled repositories of knowledge about the management and development of human resources" (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 14), few colleges and universities do even an adequate job

of supporting professional and non-professional staff except possibly in the limited area of research – and not even that in community colleges.

> [Campuses] routinely fail to conceive of, and respond to, faculty members as human beings whose needs and abilities are relevant to the workplace but extend beyond the honing of such task-related competencies as writing grants, using computers and leading classroom discussion. Moreover, campuses in general appear to have failed to take into adequate account the changing demographic and environmental factors that shape faculty careers. (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990 pp. 14-15)

Gaff (1976) and Bergquist and Phillips (1975) identified three broad areas of faculty development: personal, instructional, and organizational. According to Gaff, the three approaches are not mutually exclusive but each dimension has a different focus, purpose, and intellectual base, and involves different activities. For example, faculty development focuses on faculty members for the purpose of promoting knowledge and skills related to teaching and learning. Its knowledge base includes clinical, development, and social psychology. Primary activities are seminars, workshops, and teaching evaluations (Gaff, 1976, p. 9).

In the area of instructional development, the focus is on the curriculum, and the purpose is to improve student learning. The intellectual base includes learning theory, education, instructional technology, and systems theory. Activities include projects and workshops.

As for organizational development, the organization is the focus, and the purpose is to create an effective environment for teaching and learning. The knowledge base includes organizational theory, organizational change, and group processes. Activities

include workshops, action research, and task forces to evaluate policies (Gaff, 1976, p. 9).

Gaff (1976) observed that the instructional approach to faculty development is the one that has received the most focus of the three areas. He quoted a faculty development brochure from College Center of the Finger Lakes:

> A major shortcoming of this growing faculty development movement is that the programs created in its name tend to focus on the faculty members as teacher (instructional development) while ignoring other faculty roles that are critical to effective instruction: as persons (personal development) and as organization members (organizational development). Because a college or university is a complex, dynamic social system, the development of faculty requires a comprehensive program that assists them in all three roles. (Gaff, 1976, p. 28)

Schuster and Wheeler observed that since 1965 there has been a shift in focus from concerns over the vitality of individual faculty members to the vitality of the organization. Most recently in the 1980s, focus has shifted again, from the organization to higher education institutions as a whole (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, pp. 57-58). According to Schuster and Wheeler, renewal efforts are designed to influence "vitality," a concept discussed by Eble (1971), Maher (1982), and Clark and Lewis (1985). Vitality refers to those "essential, yet intangible, positive qualities of individuals and institutions that enable purposeful production" (Clark & Lewis, 1985, p. 3). A more precise definition is not possible because it varies with the context and historical time period. In higher education, it has to do with supporting the ability of faculty to strengthen their own careers as well as realize the institution's mission.

Previously, concerns about vitality were focused on individual faculty, but Schuster and Wheeler noted that higher education has become more sophisticated in its understanding of vitality and saw it directly connected to institutional vitality. In other words, development activities are productive only in the sense that they improve both the faculty member's professional and personal goals and the institution's mission (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 45). Indeed, organizational factors play a key role in determining faculty productivity (Andrews, 1979). Much depends on the resources the institution provides but also on the degree to which there is a match between the faculty member's goals and the institutional mission. Vitality is both the cause and the effect of organizational success. This shift in focus has implications for who is responsible for faculty development, the intended outcomes, and the strategies to achieve them.

Logically, it might be concluded that strengthening the abilities of individual faculty members will ultimately result in a stronger college or university. However, Gaff (1976, p. 75) observed that the reverse can be true: Strengthening an organization can result in more effective individuals. He defined organizational development as an effort to improve the overall functioning of whole institutions and their sub-units by systematically applying principles of group process and change. He traced the roots of this approach to the work of social theorists, management experts, and social psychologists such as Argyris (1982), Likert (1967), McGregor (1960, 1967) and Bennis (1969). From these and other writers, Gaff (1976) culled a number of propositions which are applicable to colleges and universities:

Table 7

Propositions for Organizational Development

- The environment is basic; more than anything else, it determines the behavior of individuals.
- An organization is a dynamic system of interrelated components; a change in any part of a system requires a change in other parts.
- Work groups, such as academic departments, not individuals, are the basic building blocks of an organization.
- Synergism occurs in small groups.
- Between persons in most organizations barriers develop over time that interfere with their work.
- Training programs and learning exercises can help individuals learn to work more productively with their colleagues.
- Department chairpeople are the front-line administrators with responsibility for maintaining a climate that facilitates teaching and learning.
- Most organizations can be improved by a periodic review of their function and by initiating a process of planned change.

From Toward Faculty Renewal (pp. 77-78), by J. G. Gaff, 1976, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Higher education shares many of the ideals of an effective organization which Gaff (1976, p. 7) described as open, participatory, and egalitarian. An effective organization includes feedback, is self-directed, resolves conflict, is respectful of diverse opinions, and is respectful of individual growth. On the other hand, colleges and universities are bureaucracies where inherently autonomous professionals are expected to give up part of that autonomy. Gaff noted that part of the reason why organizational development has not been extensively used in higher education is that colleges and

universities are very different in character from business corporations. Their goals are less clear cut, they are organized more horizontally, their professional staff is largely autonomous, and academics have a long tradition of skepticism when asked to consider or apply corporate techniques (Gaff, 1976, p. 80). Still, colleges and universities are highly complex organizations and as such, they can benefit from much of the research that has been conducted in this area.

Gaff (1976) went on to outline the current status and potential future of instructional improvement. Although his table (Table 8) was constructed over 20 years ago, the work of such theorists as O'Banion (1997b), Barr and Tagg (1995), and Boggs (1995, 1999) suggests that the gaps Gaff described still exist, and that the progress to close them has been inconsistent and slow. He further noted that there is a difference between incorporating an innovation into an institution and actually producing significant change. As he observed,

> The thrust of most instructional-improvement programs is to work within traditional frameworks – that is, to assume the existence of the college classroom, the conventional academic disciplines, the separation of the campus from the community, and the fifty-minute hour. With few exceptions they seek to improve learning within these traditional contexts. (Gaff, 1976, p. 181)

In this respect, organizational development becomes critical. For Gaff, the lack of a coherent and explicit faculty development philosophy makes it impossible to answer the question: "Faculty development for what?" (Gaff, 1976, p. 182). He argued that the ultimate test is whether the teaching and learning that take place make a difference in the lives of students. If this is to happen, he asserted that faculty themselves must become

Table 8

Current Status and Potential Future of Instructional Improvement

Current Status	Potential Future
Few institutions have programs.	Most institutions have programs.
Few faculty are involved.	All or most faculty are involved.
Faculty participation is limited and irregular.	Faculty participation is regular and continuous
Participation is an "overload."	Participation is provided for in normal workload.
In-service development is a peripheral activity.	In-service development is a central activity.
Budgets and resources are modest.	Budgets and resources are adequate.
"Soft" grant monies are a major source of funds.	"Hard" institutional monies are the major source of funds.
Few institutional policies support teaching effectiveness or professional development.	Many policies support teaching effectiveness and professional development.
Few permanent instruction-improvement centers conduct professional development.	Instruction-improvement centers providing professional development are permanent.
Few staff members have training and experience in consulting with colleagues.	Many staff members have training and experience in consulting with colleagues.
Little evidence of effectiveness of programs exists.	Convincing evidence of effectiveness exists.
Impact is limited to selected institutions and faculty members.	Impact is widespread among institutions and faculty.
Modest reforms aimed at better teaching are underway.	Extensive improvements in instruction and organizational operations are made.

From Toward Faculty Renewal (p. 178), by J. G. Gaff, 1976, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Reprinted with permission of Jossey-Bass, 250 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA., 94104. Copyright © 1975.

models of well-educated people. He quoted Harold Taylor, former president of Sarah Lawrence College: " We . . . need to do everything in our power to arrange the community life of our college campuses in such a way that its elements conspire to produce stimulating and provocative effects in the intellectual and personal growth of teachers" (in Gaff, 1976, pp. 185-186).

Schuster and Wheeler (1990) wrote that a great deal is known about how to enhance faculty careers. The real obstacles lie in garnering the organizational will to make faculty renewal a priority. "At base, it is the organizational culture that is salient, for that will determine whether an adequate faculty development program can take root and ...flourish" (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 16). They cautioned that doing more of the same, however, will not be effective. What is needed is a willingness to look at old problems with fresh perspectives, to consider changing the models that have shaped thinking to this point. In the following section, the mechanism by which California community colleges provide for professional development is examined.

Faculty and Staff Development in the California Community Colleges

California passed Assembly Bill 1725 (Vasconcellos) in 1988. AB1725 was a major piece of legislation that became the cornerstone of California community college reform. It was passed in recognition that the demographics and needs of California had changed and would continue to change significantly since the Master Plan for Higher Education was adopted in 1960.

> It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this act, to strengthen the capacity of the community colleges to meet the emerging needs of our state, and in particular, to better ensure that all Californians are offered a chance, challenged and taught with imagination and inspiration, offered assistance and counseling, and held to honest standards.

AB1725 attempted to both restructure and reform the California community colleges and addressed a number of key areas including governance, mission and functions, and staffing (Griffin, 1997, pp. 1-2). It is perhaps best known for its impact on shared governance and the role of the academic senate. However, nearly half of the bill (Sections 22 through 56) focuses on staffing issues such as hiring and affirmative action, credentialing, full-time to part-time staffing ratio, contracts, evaluation, and staff development. Staff development was specifically mentioned in AB1725 because of the recognition that community college instructors, like so many of their counterparts in higher education, are well grounded in their disciplines, but they are not necessarily trained to teach, especially a diverse student population with special needs.

As a result of AB1725, a Faculty and Staff Development Fund was established per §87150-4 of the California State Education Code, and $5 million was appropriated annually to support local faculty and staff development activities. Also required was the establishment of local staff development committees which would assess needs, develop a plan, and file annual compliance reports to the state. At that time, .5% or $5 million of the system's budget was allocated for staff development. The total amount remains the same 11 years later. The State Academic Senate has called for strengthening the staff development funding by requiring a 1:1 district match and strengthening the position of local college staff development coordinators by providing them with state-funded training

(Scroggins, 1998, pp. 2-3). In most cases, staff development coordinators are faculty and staff who are given a portion of reassigned time and/or a stipend to oversee staff development. For colleges in this study, reassigned time ranged from none to 100%. No coordinator received any formal training from the college .

Per §87152 of the California State Education Code, the initial allocation to each district is an amount equivalent to .5% of the fiscal year revenues received by the district for the 1987-88 fiscal year. In subsequent fiscal years, districts are capped at a maximum allocation of 2%, though funds have never exceeded the original amount. At the local level, these funds must be spent according to the authorized uses (see Appendix A). Typically, they are spent to cover the costs of Flex Days (faculty development days, which are subtracted from the total number of teaching days), conferences, workshops, and training activities for either groups or individuals. The funds are not used to cover sabbaticals or other types of leaves which are usually negotiated between faculty and their local district and board.

AB 1725 funds are not colleges' sole source of staff development. Colleges also receive funds through the Telecommunications and Technology Infrastructure Program (TTIP). These funds are earmarked for the development of a technology training infrastructure and direct training. In addition to categorical funds, colleges also encourage staff development through their general funds. For example, in 1990-91, California community colleges spent a total of $35.5 million on staff development, which included the $5 million AB1725 allocation (Walters & Howard, 1990, p. 1). Expenditures typically include funding for sabbaticals, professional growth and

development increments, and conferences. The total available amount is usually a matter of negotiation in those districts where faculty have collective bargaining.

Colleges submit annual compliance reports which account for activities and expenditures. Every 3 years, colleges are required to submit a more detailed human resources development plan. Required components are listed in Table 9.

Table 9

Required Components of AB1725 Human Resources Development Plan

- Goal/mission statement.
- Objectives, noting any new emphases and including goals and objectives for technology training.
- Background/rationale indicating how the plan is related to overall planning of the college, including educational master plans and technology plans, for example.
- Description of the needs assessment process, including valuable sources for needs analysis and constraints. Colleges are also asked to indicate how the state might be of future assistance.
- Survey forms, if any were used in the needs assessment.
- Summary of the results of the needs assessment with emphasis on critical areas of unmet need, their significance in relation to the college mission, and resources necessary to meet the need.
- List of faculty and staff development advisory committee members.
- Activities and timelines, including the flex calendar.
- Evaluation and outcomes.
- Budget.
- Coordination, including a description of efforts to relate AB1725 staff development expenditures to other staff development efforts and funding, including grants and specially funded projects using state, federal, or private dollars.

From Assembly Bill 1725, California Education Code, §87150-4 (1988).

As for what happens to these reports or what they are used for at the state level, the answer is very little. They are seldom reviewed, according to staff. In 1990, a summary report of activities was produced by the Chancellor's Office describing the staff development efforts of 33 responding colleges (Walters & Howard, 1990). The primary value of these reports appears to be to ensure that colleges are not precluded from accessing funds because they have not met the reporting requirement as specified in §87151 of the California Education Code.

In summary, the focus of this study was to investigate and describe how selected California community colleges are preparing their faculty and staff to be members of learning-centered institutions. The literature and research that formed the theoretical framework for this study and which have been reviewed in chapter 2 include the learning revolution, systems thinking, and the Information Age. Literature and research reviewed in chapter 3 include adult development and learning, faculty development, and professional development in the California community colleges.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate and describe how selected California community colleges are preparing their faculty and staff to be members of learning-centered institutions.

Several assumptions were made at the beginning of the research process. First, community colleges that have revised their vision statements to include the concept of a learning-centered institution are cognizant of the implication that they will "do business" differently as a result of this explicit commitment. This includes organizational "business" in addition to producing learning. Although colleges do not typically refer to themselves as learning organizations or describe their organizational activities as such, it was hypothesized from personal experience that the qualities of a learning organization are indeed ones which colleges seek to achieve.

Second, becoming a learning organization and thinking systemically require knowledge and a set of specific skills. For this paradigm shift to be effective, participants will require communication skills and systems knowledge. They should be exposed to and provided with sustained practice in the core disciplines that are necessary in a learning organization: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking.

Third, if community colleges are to become the learning organizations they strive to be, one of their primary commitments should be to the education of their own faculty and staff in systems thinking and practices. Although many colleges have heightened awareness of themselves as systems, it is not clear whether and to what degree those colleges have developed the capabilities of their faculty and staff to think and act systemically, to spot learning disabilities and archetypes common to learning organizations, and to use that knowledge to find creative and long-term solutions that will enhance the learning process.

Research Design

Of the three forms of educational research described by Carr and Kemmis (1986) – positivist, interpretative, and critical – this study is closest to the interpretive form. Merriam defined interpretive research as research in which "education is considered to be a process and school is a lived experience. Understanding the meaning of the process or experience constitutes the knowledge to be gained from an inductive, hypothesis- or theory-generating (rather than a deductive or testing) mode of inquiry" (Merriam, 1998, p. 4).

The interpretive form of educational research is also qualitative. That is, it attempts to "understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible," and it is based on the constructivist assumption that "reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have

constructed" (Merriam, 1998, pp. 5-6). Additionally, qualitative research is characterized by the fact that "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. . . it usually involves fieldwork. . . it primarily employs an inductive research strategy. . . and the product is richly descriptive" (Merriam, 1998, pp. 6-9). The validity of qualitative research is established by whether or not the explanation fits a given description (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 50).

For the purposes of this study, qualitative research is an appropriate choice because the issue is one of organizational capacity to implement policy, in this case to become a learning-centered college. Rist (1998) argued that qualitative research is particularly suited to the nature of policy decision-making, which is less an event and more of a process, and which requires an ongoing set of adjustments and midcourse corrections (Rist, 1998). He identified three phases of the policy cycle, each of which requires a different set of research questions and results in information which is used differently. These phases are formulation, implementation, and accountability. Of these phases, implementation and accountability are the most relevant to this study.

With respect to implementation, Rist identified three clusters of questions which the qualitative researcher can use to determine how a policy is being operationalized. The first cluster of questions focuses on information about the implementation process itself. A second cluster examines the problem or condition that led to the research because, as Rist noted, "no problem or condition stands still, simply because the policy community has decided to take action" (Rist, 1998, p. 411). The third cluster of

questions focuses on the organization's attempts to respond and how the organization conceptualizes that response.

> Here questions would be asked that address the expertise and qualifications of those responsible for the implementation effort, the interest shown by management and staff, the controls in place regarding the allocation of resources, the organizational structure and whether it adequately reflects the demands on the organization to respond to this initiative, what means exist in the organization for deciding among competing demands, the strategies the organization uses to clarify misunderstandings or ambiguities in how it defines its role in implementation, and, finally, what kinds of interactive information or feedback loops are in place to assist managers in their ongoing efforts to move the program toward the stated objectives of the policy. (Rist, 1998, p. 412)

With respect to the accountability phase, qualitative research "allows for the study of both anticipated and unanticipated outcomes, changes in understandings and perceptions as a result of the efforts of the program or policy, the direction and intensity of any social change that results from the program, and the strengths and weaknesses of the administrative/organization structure that was used to operationalize the program" (Rist, 1998, p. 413). Among the questions to be asked in this phase are questions about whether objectives were met, whether any changes occurred in the problem or condition that would affect impacts and outcomes, and finally, accountability.

> Here qualitative work can address concerns of management supervision, leadership of the organization with clear goals in mind, the attention to processes and procedures that would strengthen the capacity of the organization to implement the policy initiative effectively, the use of data-based decision making, and the degree of alignment or congruence between the leadership and the staff. All of these issues speak directly to the capacity of an organization to mobilize itself to provide effective service. (Rist, 1998, p. 416)

Qualitative research can be especially valuable when measuring institutional capacity, "the ability of the institution to deliver on the tasks that have been delegated to it (Rist, 1998, 420). Rist noted that qualitative research in the area of institutional constraints and how they affect the ability of an organization to fulfill its mission is not being done, yet these constraints must be explicitly understood or organizations may be held accountable for achieving goals they are not properly designed to achieve.

There are many types of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Lancy, 1993; Patton, 1990). The research for this dissertation is most closely identified with the case study, which Merriam (1998) distinguished from other types of qualitative research because it involves "intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system" (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). Case studies are "employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation" (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). Perhaps the most critical characteristic, however, is that a case study is delimited – what Smith (1978) referred to as a "bounded system." What is going to be studied — a person, a program, a group, a policy – can be "fenced in" (Merriam, 1998, p. 27). The case study can be primarily particularistic, descriptive, or heuristic in nature but can also contain aspects of all three. The knowledge that results from case studies is more concrete, more contextual, more developed by reader interpretation, and based more on reference populations than other types of qualitative studies (Stake, 1981, pp. 35-36). As Merriam noted, the case study is a design well

suited to research about processes. It can monitor, that is, describe, the process, and it can explain cause and effect.

As with any research model, the case study has its strengths and its weaknesses, though Merriam asserted that the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses (1998, p. 41). Case studies, as Merriam noted, are well suited to education. Case studies permit the investigation of complex social units with multiple variables. The insights gained can be used as the foundation for future research as well as for the improvement of practice. Case studies can describe, interpret, evaluate a phenomenon, build a theory, or a combination (Merriam, 1998, p. 43).

The weaknesses of case studies are those that have been applied to qualitative research, in general. For example, the product that results may be too detailed to be of practical use for policymakers. Much is dependent upon the skills of the researcher for whom there are few clear guidelines on how to analyze the data that have been collected. Also of concern is any bias that results from the source of funding for case studies as well as the dissonance that can occur when discrepancies are revealed between espoused theories and theories in action or put more simply, when there is little relationship between what is said, what is perceived, and what is done. The most significant criticism, however, is the concern that since case studies represent only a part of a whole, they may lead to incorrect conclusions, oversimplifications, or exaggerations (Merriam, 1998, p. 42). This study included six colleges or 5.7% of the total number of colleges in the California community college system.

In this study, the research design did not consist of a single case study, but of multiple case studies and included both document analysis and interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 40). I selected six California community colleges based on criteria that would provide information-rich cases for study. I began with a document review, a survey of the mission and vision statements of all 106 California community colleges to determine which colleges explicitly included the concept of a learning-centered college among their goals. A survey of the web sites of 106 community colleges and their districts showed that over one third directly state or imply that being a *learning community* or *college* or *organization* is part of their mission or vision or goals. (These terms are not used consistently by colleges.) This is a marked increase over a 1993 study conducted by Barr, who reported he could find only two colleges which included the term "learning" in their statements (Barr, interview, 2/2/99). Their statements of mission, philosophy, or goals stress learning over teaching, learning that is lifelong, and the desire to be a community of learners – key components of a learning organization as described by Senge. For example,

> West Valley College is a public community college whose primary purpose is to facilitate successful learning. It is committed to the education of the individual along with fostering the economic development of the communities that it serves. West Valley College provides students with opportunities to participate in a wide spectrum of educational experiences designed to fulfill their academic and career needs. Encouraged to seek knowledge and wisdom as lifelong learners, our students are motivated to expand their human potential, enrich the quality of their lives, and develop the job skills and other competencies necessary to function in contemporary society.
> (http://www.westvalley.edu)

Next, I conducted a review of the current staff development plans filed by colleges and districts with the State Chancellor's Office. This review showed that far fewer colleges had explicitly connected staff development activities to their goals. However, the reports could not be considered completely reliable indicators of colleges' staff development programs. In part, the nature of the forms limited the responses. Also, colleges provided varying degrees of detail. Moreover, staff development plans, which are intended to be compliance reports for the use of AB1725 staff development funds, do not always account for other, non-AB1725 funded development activities, such as sabbaticals and column advancement projects. Nevertheless, it was possible to select about 10 colleges who appeared to link staff development activities to the goal of becoming a learning-centered institution.

After a more thorough review, this first level of sampling resulted in six colleges being selected for campus visits based on their goals statements, staff development plans, and other evidence of commitment to the concept of a learning-centered institution, such as receipt of grants, sponsorship of related conferences and workshops, publication of articles, or referrals from the field. Of the six colleges selected, two were in northern California and four were in southern California. All six would be classified as medium- to large-sized suburban/urban colleges. Two are part of multi-college districts. Demographic data for the six colleges are appended (see Appendix E).

I conducted a second level of purposeful sampling within the case to delimit the participants. I considered and rejected the use of a survey, primarily because the community college system is frequently overwhelmed with questionnaires that tend to get

misplaced or redirected within the institutions. The interview method of data collection was selected because I felt that interviewing would result in more descriptive data. Moreover, it would permit me to identify and pursue unanticipated issues.

I based the selection of the positions of participants on my knowledge of the community college system. I selected participants who would have knowledge of both the college's mission or vision statements and staff development activities. They represented all faculty, staff, and administrative employee groups so that I could obtain the broadest possible picture. Interviewing multiple representatives of each college also provided a means of comparing and checking accounts for reliability. This approach would also provide perspectives from both instruction and student services.

Table 10

Positions Selected for Interview and Number of Interviews Conducted

Positions	No.
▪ Academic Senate Presidents	5
▪ Chancellor, California State Community Colleges	1
▪ Chief Executive Officers	7
▪ Chief Instructional Officers	5
▪ Chief Student Services Officers	5
▪ Classified Senate Presidents (or union leaders if no classified senate)	6
▪ District Chancellors	1
▪ Specialist, Staff Development, California State Community Colleges	1
▪ Staff Development Coordinators	6
▪ Additional faculty and staff as indicated by primary participants	3
▪ TOTAL	40

I contacted each participant first by e-mail and included an introduction of myself, my background and current position; a description of the project; a description of the

process; a request for an interview; and interview parameters, including debriefing opportunities. As I received responses, I mailed back packets of information. These included a confirmation letter, a copy of the interview questions, informed consent forms, and a return envelope for the signed consent form (see Appendix F). I sent final e-mail confirmations a few days prior to the interviews. I maintained a spreadsheet for each college, noting all correspondence and interview schedules.

Initially, I designed the interviews to be highly structured. The type and order of questions were predetermined. Questions were essentially the same for all interviewees, though there was some alteration to better fit the interviewee's position (see Appendix G). Prior to beginning the study, I used colleagues at my own institution to pilot the questions and the interview techniques. As a result, I modified the order and nature of some of the questions. It became apparent that I would need to move from a tightly structured interview format to a semi-structured or occasionally even unstructured format to take full advantage of the information provided by the participants. I used probes extensively to pursue partial or new information provided by interviewees. In most cases, I taped interviews and took notes. After the interviews were taped, I created an interview log (Merriam, 1998) for each interview. I transcribed many portions of the tapes verbatim and noted important ideas. I used the tape counter to record the exact location for transcribed information. As I logged interviews, I reviewed them for key concepts, recurrent patterns, and unanticipated information. I cross-referenced the logs by college and by position.

I provided at least one opportunity after the interviews for the participants to debrief and to confirm the accuracy of the information collected or to modify the information at a later date. Even though the names of colleges and the names of college personnel were not used (only titles of positions), participants were given an opportunity to indicate any quotations that they did not want to appear in the published dissertation or to clarify or correct the information they had provided.

There were some special considerations. As noted earlier, one of the complicating factors in the research project was the inconsistent use of terminology as evidenced by the mingling of the terms *learning community, learning college*, and *learning organization.* Early in each interview, I had to determine which term was primarily used on a particular college campus and how the interviewee defined that term.

Prior to and during the data collection process, I conducted a review of the literature. The results are described in detail in chapters 2 and 3. Major areas of focus included systems thinking and intervention, reconceptualizing schools and learning, higher education reform, andragogy, and professional development. I also reviewed literature pertaining to California Assembly Bill 1725, which mandated staff development within the community college system.

Findings from the research study are discussed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS

Research Design Summary

I reviewed the mission and vision statements of the 106 California community colleges and identified those colleges that expressed the goal of becoming a learning college, learning community, or learning organization. I also reviewed the human resource development plans for all the system's colleges on file in the State Chancellor's office. Mission and vision statements were compared with human resource development plans to identify those colleges that appeared to link staff development activities with the goal of becoming a learning college, learning community, or learning organization. I selected six for this study (see Appendix E for demographics).

Interview questions (Appendix G) were developed for the seven positions selected for interview at each of the colleges: academic senate president, chief executive officer, chief instructional officer, chief student services officer, chancellor (if applicable), classified senate or union representative, and staff development coordinator. I conducted a total of 40 interviews (see Table 10). In addition, I distributed a follow-up survey to the staff development coordinators I had interviewed (see Appendix G).

I taped interviews and maintained handwritten logs for each. I then entered the interview logs into a word processing program and cross-referenced them by institution, position, and subject. In addition, the sorting capability of the word processor was used to cluster comments by subject in order to identify common themes. Information was

also analyzed to identify areas of discussion that either did not occur or occurred with less frequency than anticipated.

One of the complicating factors in the research project was the inconsistent use of terms such as *learning community*, *learning college*, and *learning organization*, all of which can be found in the vision, mission, and/or goal statements of many colleges. Thus, it became important to establish early in the interview which terms were primarily used on a particular college campus and how the college and/or the interviewee defined them.

The need to define these terms has been addressed by Terry O'Banion, one of the reform movement's most vocal spokespersons. "As community colleges embrace the learning revolution, there is some understandable confusion regarding a number of terms that have appropriated the word 'learning' as part of their nomenclature" (O'Banion, 1996). Given that most of the participants in this study were familiar with O'Banion's work, his definitions were used in cases where participants indicated they believed there was a difference but could not articulate it and asked for some direction from the interviewer.

The terms *learning paradigm*, *learning college*, and *learning organization* are defined in chapter 2. They were often used synonymously by faculty, staff, and administrators. This was especially true of the terms *learning college* and *learning organization*. Unless the participant was familiar with systems thinking, s/he did not distinguish between the two. However, participants generally did see a difference between a learning *community* and a learning *college* or *organization*. Regardless of

position – faculty, staff, or administrators – they defined a learning community much as O'Banion did, with one exception (see below). That is, they saw a learning *community* as a curricular construct. However, that is not to suggest that they consistently used the term as they defined it. The phrases *community of learners* or *learning community* proved to be interchangeable with the other two on numerous occasions, even though the speaker had indicted that s/he considered them to mean different things.

Learning college or *learning-centered college* was the term nearly all participants preferred using to describe what they perceived to be the learning-centered and student-centered philosophy of their college. There was one exception. One chief executive officer (College F) noted that she had specifically championed the use of *learning community* for *learning college* because she was trying to meld two concepts: putting learning at the center and conveying Wheatley's concept of a web of relationships (Wheatley, 1992). "For lack of a better term, I called it a *learning community*." The staff development coordinator of that college also used the term *community* because she believed it was a more comprehensive term than *college*.[1]

The term with which colleges were least comfortable was *learning organization*. One reason may be higher education's tendency not to think of itself in an organizational sense. Bennis (1973) noted that in the 1970s there was a notable lack of research on the university as a social system. He commented that university researchers "have largely

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[1] Millett (1962) made an interesting observation that community is the principle means of internal organization in higher education precisely because it permits its members to avoid absolute authority, which higher education abhors (Millett, 1962, pp. 60-61).

left unexamined their own institution, its tribal customs and patterns" (Bennis, 1973, p. 11). A review of more current literature (Bergquist, 1992; Carver & Sergiovanni, 1969; Cohen, 1998; O'Banion, 1997b; Perkins, 1973; Scileppi, 1988) suggests that this situation no longer exists to the same degree.

There is also question as to how accurate it is to think of colleges or universities as organizations in the general sense that one thinks of business and government agencies (Millett, 1962; O'Neil, 1995). Millett (1962) acknowledged surface similarities. All are purposeful, objective-driven, specialized, integrated, authoritarian, and hierarchical. However, he argued that deeper differences – institutional setting, purpose, operation, and internal organization – make colleges and universities unique (Millett, 1962, pp. 26-27, 32).

Another reason for the discomfort may be that educators detect a "corporate ring" to the phrase, as one chief executive officer noted. Educators are generally skeptical of the applicability of corporate management concepts and terminology to higher education. In a conversation with Senge, O'Neil observed that "educators are sometimes skeptical about examples from business. They feel such examples do not necessarily apply to an organization whose products are people." Senge responded, "Well, I think there's some validity in that viewpoint" (O'Neil, 1995).

In 1999, the California Community Colleges Academic Senate published a position paper, "The Future of the Community College: A Faculty Perspective." One of

the motivations for writing the paper was a resolution passed by the Senate to redefine faculty productivity. It took direct aim at such corporate concepts as Total Quality Management (TQM) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and resolved not to endorse "the use of TQM/CQI as a model for restructuring the education process." The authors of the paper further asserted that the aim of critics of higher education

> is now to impose modes of management on educational institutions in imitation of the managerial techniques of transnational corporations, with the effect of rendering educational institutions an extension of the marketplace and, in the bargain, virtually deifying those at the top of the managerial class, in both business and education alike. (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 1999]

Another reason participants had difficulty with *learning organization* may have been their tendency to focus on student needs. Participants consistently expressed the belief that their professional mission was to serve students, first and foremost. It was often difficult to get participants to think of their college as a learning organization and to consider their role as members.

> When I think of [a learning organization]. . . I guess it depends on how one defines learning organization. If you use the definition that the people in Michigan have used. . . where. . . the thrust is more on things like focus on the students' learning and the outcomes of that learning and multiple ways of accessing learning and that sort of thing. . . I guess in a way that does apply to staff, having those outcomes, too. Substitute the word *staff* for *students* [and] I would say, yes, [we are a learning organization]. I don't think we precisely use those terms in anything here but I think in essence that's what's happening. (Academic Senate President, College E)

On one hand, this is the kind of "problem" organizations would be happy to have: the single-minded commitment of employees to the organization's mission. On the other

hand, it presents some challenges when the organization attempts to look at its own needs. In this case, for employees to shift their focus meant making a clear connection between student success and organizational strength and capacity. Almost to a person, interviewees indicated that their fundamental criterion for any decision is – or ought to be – what is good for students. It is entirely possible to successfully use that same criterion at the organizational level once it has been articulated and accepted that what is good for the organization is likely to be good for the students and *vice versa*. As one chief executive officer expressed it, "When things get confusing, we'll go back to what's good for students."

However, a larger issue that was encountered at nearly every college was discomfort, ranging from mild to extreme, with some of the concepts associated with the learning revolution. Particularly questionable in the eyes of many faculty was the *learning paradigm*. There was considerable skepticism on the part of faculty as to the distinctions being drawn between teaching and learning. As the concept has been disseminated, faculty have taken umbrage to what they perceive to be an invalidation of teaching, to which they have devoted their careers, and an implication that students have not been learning. In the eyes of the proponents of the concept, it has been oversimplified and misunderstood and, as a result, has distracted educators from the main point:

> Reform efforts in higher education often get stalled in a debate over the meaning of core concepts – the most divisive of which is the issue of "teaching versus learning." Community colleges take great pride in their commitment to teaching, yet are often portrayed as champions of teaching over learning. The community college does place high value on

> teaching, yet at its core, the means to the end of teaching is learning. This debate only served to divide the higher education community, demeaning the work of faculty and placing them on the defensive. A major task for institutions will be to balance the two and to evaluate how practices and policies will be affected as they seek to become more learning-centered. (PBS, 1999)

As a result of the controversy over the learning college concept, as well as other terms including *learning*, faculty, staff, and administrators admitted making conscious decisions not to use the prevailing terminology. Having determined for themselves which aspects of these concepts were valuable, managers especially had become very cautious about using these terms.

> I began to realize that learning college. . . was causing people some problems. In other words it was like [a] "learning college trademark" kind of thing and they didn't want to get into that notion, but there was a great groundswell, a positive response to becoming a learning <u>focused</u> institution which is really now the way I talk about it. . . . Some [of our faculty] bought into the learning paradigm right away. . . . I think the vast majority have not bought into that yet. It's sort of like "I'm not sure what you're saying." When we say, "We're focused on learning," they're hearing what's wrong with teaching and we have to keep talking about this. It doesn't mean you're doing anything wrong. It just means the students aren't learning as well as we think they could and what could we do to help? (Chief Executive Officer, College D)

> Frankly, one of the things that you think about is when you are going to use certain terms and when you are not going to use certain terms. You might be able to move further toward a learning organization by not even talking about a learning organization but trying to <u>be</u> a learning organization. When you start <u>talking</u> about a learning organization, you can almost turn people off, so there's what is professed and there's what is done. . . .Sometimes I am conscious about not using terms when I think the effect of those terms might be less than positive. . . . We talk more about the kinds of things we must engage in that are critical for our success. (Chief Executive Officer, College E)

> We're professionals. We don't like being manipulated. We don't like being told what to do. . . .I'm mostly keeping it very subtle. I don't need any pronouncements because we're pros and we don't like to be herded. (Chief Instructional Officer, College E)

As for faculty and staff, many felt that they had always been learning-centered, that they were doing "it," but not necessarily describing it in the popular terms.

> When you tell a longtime teacher we're now a learning community, that's sort of insulting. Where was I before? Where am I now if I'm not already in a learning community? . . . We're doing things that we're not calling the learning community. (Academic Senate President, College D)

> We have not defined ourselves kind of in the Terry O'Banion sense of the learning community and in fact we're in the process right now of redoing our college plan and I don't think that term even came in there. And I think we believe in it and we're striving in that direction, but I don't think we've kind of adopted that terminology. (Academic Senate President, College E)

> The teaching/learning shift was not well accepted. We monkeyed with it. We brought in O'Banion. He pissed everyone off. They rejected O'Banion and reverted to status quo. It coincided with our reorganization – itself a problem – and O'Banion was perceived as externally imposed. We're moving – slowly – but working against [ourselves]. People were irritated at the absolute assurance of O'Banion that the world had changed and that their world was over. If [only] he'd been more questioning than prophetic, not coming down on a cable. I read Senge right after the incident and sensed the importance of a learning institution to the president. It helped explain a worthy thing that had not worked. We hadn't set principles of a learning institution in place. The reorganization failed, O'Banion failed, as did introduction of learning institution values. I would have talked about is it true there is a revolution? Where are we? What do we know? Trying to create a vision. . . . I've learned from those failures. I'd have him come <u>after</u> they'd been prepared and get <u>them</u> (faculty) to tell me there was a shift. [O'Banion] invalidated the faculty. Faculty are making changes but we could have been a leader. Now the administration is waiting for faculty and we administrators look like trend people. We're not trusted. (Chief Instructional Officer, College B)

> It doesn't help me to say the lecture method stinks, be student oriented, stop being the "sage on the stage," be the "guide on the side." That's really offensive to faculty. Even Terry O'Banion and his whole book and his whole speeches. You know, anybody can criticize the existing model. You can't say, "This is all wrong and what we have proposed is all right." What he proposes is very sketchy, and what he's setting up as the bad person isn't necessarily all wrong. But that's what you do when you try to make a point . . . No criticism . . . I would do the same thing, but [with] faculty. . .there's a little sensitivity. . . It's a difference of approach. You'll never hear me use this language. One, I just couldn't get away with it on this campus. (Chief Instructional Officer, College E)

> Faculty felt that they're doing some of these things but not calling it that . . . We haven't packaged it like that. (Chief Student Services Officer, College D)

> We're already doing it (learning college). . . . We don't call it that. The faculty were put off by [the learning paradigm] presentation. Being a learning college is not a statement we make. It's inherent. We're doing this. We just haven't collectively said it. (Staff Development Coordinator, College C)

However, not everyone was as certain of either the concept or of whether they were, in fact, "doing it" or even whether they knew exactly what to do. As one chief student services officer observed,

> We need to bring somebody in to help us to understand the concept of a learning college and then to help us to develop a plan in terms of how we would respond. How do you do business in a learning college that's different than the way we do business now? It's not a matter of not having money. . . . What does a learning college look like? . . . How is that different from this college? And, [we need] to understand those concepts a lot better before we start putting the pieces in there. How do we operationalize that in Student Services? . . . We have in our catalog in the mission statement about becoming a learning college but I'm not sure we've done things that are in support of us becoming a learning college. We went for a brief time where that was kind of the buzz discussion but it has not been since then. . . . We as a college have not focused on it. The focus is still on student success but the language has not been within

> the context of a learning college. (Chief Student Services Officer, College D)

> We need to adjust our attitude toward it (learning college). I'm sure there's a guru out there. We need to identify common ground and define our roles. (Academic Senate President, College D)

One effect of this deliberate effort to avoid using loaded terms or controversial concepts or to avoid a red herring, is that it makes it very difficult for anyone, especially someone external to the system such as a legislator, to get a consistent picture of what is taking place on community college campuses in respect to the learning emphasis. It can have a profound effect on whether and how progress is measured. On the surface, it would appear that colleges are not moving in the same direction, not committed to the same goals. In fact, when one probes below the surface, it is much more obvious that colleges are remarkably unified in their primary goals and are exploring many of the same alternatives. As one staff development coordinator (College C) asserted, "We're doing this. We just haven't collectively said it." The flip side can be just as deleterious. That is, colleges may spend a great deal of time and energy discussing learning issues but never move beyond discussion to action, never make substantive change.

> The education community abounds with buzzwords, such as "learning organizations," "learning communities," and "learning-centered." Although these terms possess similarities, meanings vary from person to person. In order for institutions to become more learning-centered, a "universal language" must be adopted. But institutions must also guard against the use of that new language to give the appearance of change while traditional systems remain. Colleges and universities must work to establish an institutional language that reflects and supports the values of the learning college in program and practice. (PBS, 1999)

Community Colleges as Learning Organizations

In his book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (1990), Peter Senge established the principles of the learning organization, a model very popular in the business world and steadily being adapted by institutions of higher education. Based upon the five principles of the learning organization, a college would flatten its organization, develop models of collaboration for the staff, review its goals, and help staff to better learn how to do their jobs. But it is assumed that becoming a learning organization insures that an institution is also learning-centered. The learning organization is in many ways designed for the institution's staff and provides no guarantee that a learning organization will become learning-centered (PBS, 1999).

Although the terminology was used inconsistently and there was variation in local definitions, the *learning college* was nevertheless a concept to which no one in this study objected. Participants were consistent and unanimous in their belief in student success as the primary mission of the community colleges, and student success and learning are very compatible concepts.

> What I perceive a learning college is, is a college where the focus is basically on student learning and the college looks at multiple ways to try and assess that. . . . In the learning college as I know it, the focus is really on the student and student outcomes and looking at some way of measuring how students have learned. (Chief Student Services Officer, College D)

> Student success is our primary concern. (Chief Student Services Officer, College C)

> We're here for students #1. (Classified Staff Member, College D)

> I define *learning college* as students' learning comes first. All decisions should be based on whether student learning is facilitated and then connected to that. (Staff Development Coordinator, College B)

Participants in the study were so focused on this goal that it often proved to be difficult to shift the conversation from student learning to organizational learning. With the exception of staff development coordinators and chief executive officers, most other faculty, staff, and administrators did not think of their colleges in terms of learning organizations. In the case of faculty, they often had difficulty thinking of themselves as members of learning organizations or even more basic, as employees – a common perspective of higher education faculty (Millett, 1962, p. 101). In spite of their general aversion to corporate analogies, several faculty nonetheless referred to themselves as *subcontractors* and *entrepreneurs* and stressed the fact the teaching is a relatively isolated and certainly very independent profession. For many faculty, that relative isolation and independence were among their reasons for entering higher education in the first place (Davis, 1995, pp. 76-77). Thus, in many cases, it took several attempts before interviewees understood the distinction between learning *college* and learning *organization* and began to think about the knowledge and skills they and their colleagues should have as members of a learning organization.

Typically, participants were able to approach this issue by describing the skills they valued in college activities outside the classroom, such as committees, task forces, senate meetings, and department and division meetings. When analyzed and clustered, these skills are congruent with Senge's "component technologies," or five disciplines, "each [of which] provides a vital dimension in building organizations that can truly

'learn'" (Senge, 1990, p. 6). It is important to note that for Senge, the five disciplines are theories or techniques, "developmental path[s] for acquiring certain skills or competencies" (Senge, 1990, p. 10). However, Senge's disciplines extend beyond the boundary of management disciplines in that they are also personal disciplines and as such, have to do with "how we think, what we truly want, and how we interact and learn with one another" (Senge, 1990, pp. 10-11).

Building Shared Vision

> You cannot have a learning organization without shared vision. (Senge, 1990, p. 209)

> Strategic planning doesn't mean anything to me. No mission or strategic plan matters because I know what my role in the classroom is, what my mission is. Some people look at the vision; that's their job. I have a clean sense of what I do. (Staff Development Coordinator and instructor, College B)

As noted earlier, I found community college faculty, staff, and administrators at all levels, local and state, to be remarkably consistent in their understanding of their mission: student success. Moreover, there was little mention of negative visions – that is, what they want to avoid versus what they want to have happen. Negative visions are limiting, according to Senge. They require that energy be put into prevention, not growth; they imply a sense of powerlessness; they are short term. Negative visions are driven by fear, and though fear can cause great change in a short period of time, it does not result in continuing growth (Senge, 1990, p. 225).

If this sample is representative of the entire system, then the California community college system possesses a powerful lever for making change, and that lever is based on a culture of commitment rather than compliance, commitment that appears to be both personal and professional. As one classified staff member noted, classified staff, unlike faculty, can do their jobs anywhere, but they choose to work at a community college where they have a sense of contribution, both to individual students and to their community. The convergence of the personal and the professional visions is what gives coherence to otherwise diverse activities, according to Senge.

> A vision is truly shared when you and I have a similar picture and are committed to one another having it, not just to each of us, individual, having it. When people truly share a vision they are connected, bound together by a common aspiration. Personal visions derive their power from an individual's deep caring for the vision. Shared visions derive their power from a common caring. In fact, we have to come to believe that one of the reasons people seek to build shared visions is their desire to be connected in an important undertaking. (Senge, 1990, p. 206)

Among the skills, attributes, and behaviors that interviewees indicated were important were those that help to create and sustain a shared vision. For example, passion, love of learning, commitment to community college students, and caring were frequently mentioned. One faculty member hoped for "smart" people. But more important than intelligence, in his opinion, was the ability to care about the college and its students.

Although the apparent presence of a strongly shared vision should be considered a major strength, it can be weakened, even die, if organizations are not able to maintain what Senge referred to as "creative tension" – the tension between the vision and reality.

Limiting forces that can cause the premature death of a vision include dissipation of focus, especially as more people get involved and personal visions become more diverse. It becomes important to both articulate the shared vision and, perhaps more importantly, find ways to accommodate or "harmonize" diverse visions. This is one need that can be directly addressed by a staff development program, especially activities designed to orient new employees to the college.

One of the themes that emerged from the interviews was the anticipation of new hires, which would bring diverse and fresh perspectives into the institutions. Community colleges are by definition diverse institutions, and it would indeed be difficult to find a community college that was not explicit about its commitment to diversity. Almost without exception, interviewees noted that one of the weaknesses in achieving their vision was the presence of older faculty and staff who refused to change. To a college, the feeling was that little could be done about those faculty and staff other than to simply wait until they inevitably retired and focus instead on hiring and supporting employees who were open to change. Openness and willingness to change were perceived as highly desirable skills and necessary if colleges were to meet the needs of their diverse student populations.

Other limiting factors noted by Senge include limited time and energy when people become overwhelmed by current reality and lose their long-term focus. Time and energy are indeed precious commodities in higher education, especially in community colleges where the teaching load is the heaviest among the three segments of higher education. In addition, the legislative mandate of shared governance adds considerable

responsibility to all employees. As one staff development coordinator observed, "My experience with shared governance is that I do more. My other jobs didn't go away. . . Time is the greatest weakness and threat."

It was noteworthy that most staff development coordinators in this study had multiple assignments. For example, one coordinator was also academic senate vice president, chair of the curriculum committee, and taught at least one course. For each of the assignments outside the classroom, he received reassigned time. However, this was not true for all coordinators. One coordinator, an instructor and department chair, received no assigned time, primarily because in her small department, there was no one else to do the work. There was no task that she was able to reassign. She and the college's president developed a job description for a 60% staff development coordinator position but could find no one willing or able to take the job. In this instance, a heretofore small college was experiencing a period of major growth, sorely taxing the time and energy of its staff. She commented, "What we're doing may not be what people want, but it is what I have time to do." Coordinators frequently observed that the lack of time for most faculty and staff made it difficult to plan staff development activities outside of designated staff development days. Also noted by interviewees were the time constraints imposed by the system, especially the 16 to 18-week semester, which meant that solutions to problems generally had to be found within those time frames. If summer intervened, then the problem-solving efforts would have to begin all over again in the fall.

Related to the time issue is the last limiting factor noted by Senge: people losing their connection to one another by virtue of lack of time or skills. One of the threats most often mentioned by colleges was the lack of time to plan, to evaluate, and to reflect. One college, well known for its efforts to redesign its operations, attempted such redesign projects only between semesters. The activity was focused and intense and completed on average within a month or two.

Staff development coordinators frequently mentioned the desirability of activities that would connect faculty and staff on both the personal and professional level. As more than one participant noted, success was dependent upon the strength of the relationships within the organization. Again, this appears to be another strength of those colleges surveyed. There was little evidence of the distrust that has historically characterized faculty and administration relationships. That is not to suggest that problems did not occur, but faculty generally made a point of indicating that they respected their administrative teams, that they found them supportive and fair, irrespective of whether the college had collective bargaining for faculty. This was not as true for the relationship between classified staff and faculty (see section on personal mastery, below).

There remains one other threat to shared vision, according to Senge. That is the lack of systems thinking. Instead, according to Senge, many organizations are dominated by "linear thinking" or the "event mentality" (Senge, 1990, p. 231). In other words, people react to change rather than generate it. The result is eventually "hollow 'vision statements,' good ideas that are never taken to heart" (Senge, 1990, p. 231). Besides lack of time and the potential for community college faculty and staff to be overwhelmed, the

greatest danger is that change becomes something to resist, not to embrace. Colleges were aware of this threat. It is one of the reasons many managers indicated a cautious approach to concepts such as the learning paradigm. Their concerns appear to be well founded given the skepticism many faculty and staff expressed about the learning revolution. The 1999 California Community College Academic Senate paper on the future of community colleges from a faculty perspective reflected that ambivalence.

Mental Models

> One thing all managers know is that many of the best ideas never get put into practice. Brilliant strategies fail to get translated into action. Systemic insights never find their way into operating policies. A pilot experiment may prove to everyone's satisfaction that a new approach leads to better results, but widespread adoption of the approach never occurs. (Senge, 1990, p. 174)

> I had assumed we were in the learning business, that our work was about learning, but in fact, the way we have set up our organizations is to instruct, to produce instruction. The end product was instruction. I thought the end product was learning. . .The reason for not changing is both simple and complex at the same time, but we've all bought into the same paradigm. . . . How come we don't innovate our instructional affairs? Lots of research says X is better than Y. How come colleges don't systematically shift? . . . That people don't like change is not a sufficient answer. (Staff member, College C)

Substitute the phrase *mental model* for *paradigm* in the preceding quote and the link between Senge's theory of the learning organization and the learning paradigm is clear. For Senge, mental models are "deeply held internal images of how the world works, images that limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting" (Senge, 1990, p.

174). A paradigm, "as most natural scientists and now a growing number of business leaders know, is a pattern or a model. It provides a way of understanding and making sense of information about a subject. When people function within a system, they operate according to its paradigm. They honor its boundaries and obey its rules" (Boggs, 1995-96, p. 25). The result of adhering to a mental model or a paradigm can mean success within the system. It can also mean that people within the system cannot see alternative perspectives which may lie outside the boundaries (Barker, 1989). They cannot think "outside the box." Moreover, how people see the world determines how they act in it. Senge quoted Argyris (1982) that "although people do not [always] behave congruently with their espoused theories [what they say], they do behave congruently with their theories-in-use," that is, with their mental models (Senge, 1990, p. 175).

It is not a question, however, of whether a given mental model is right or wrong. As Senge noted, "by definition, all mental models are simplifications." According to Senge, "the problems with mental models arise when the models are tacit – when they exist below the level of awareness" (Senge, 1990, 176). Mental models can exert a powerful inertia that can overcome "the best systemic insights."

Participants in this study did not use the term *mental models*. Within their environment, *paradigm* is the common term. Still, they struggled with both the terminology and the concept. Their reactions ranged from acceptance to rejection, but most appeared to be seriously considering the positive and the negative implications of shifting from one mental model to another. Perhaps in this case, the process is as important as the product. Whether a given mental model prevails may or may not have

significant, long-term impact. What may have significant and long-term impact is participants learning not only that mental models exist but how to expose them in such a way that decision-making processes are actually improved.

To a great extent, community colleges in this study were aware of the need to recognize and manage mental models more effectively, although it was not typically expressed in Senge's terms. It was often expressed as a desirable attribute. For example, interviewees frequently mentioned the following desirable qualities among co-workers:

> Openness. Willingness to consider new ideas and different opinions. (Staff Development Coordinator, College B)

> Attitude of "I'm a learner" and "I'm willing to participate in an organization where my job description will change over time." (Staff, College C)

> We need people willing to have their roles changed and willing to learn new skills, content, and behavior all the time. (Staff, College C)

> What you look for is . . . a combination of a person who's open, who feels that there's a lot to learn, that we haven't answered all the questions. That sense of openness is one characteristic and that has to be combined with a certain level of motivational passion. I don't know how you train for these things. That openness factor influences everything else because as a team member you know if you have somebody on your team who is closed [because] there is a certain dysfunctionality. (Chief Executive Officer, College E)

> You want open-minded, pie-in-the-sky thinking – people who think that way. (Staff Development Coordinator, College E)

> The hardest skill to master is the brainstorming. We all live in our little boxes. Getting people to think outside the box is the hardest. We're not often asked to sit around and brainstorm on how to make things better.

> We probably should be but we're not and I don't think we're atypical. . . To some extent [that goes] against a lot of how organizations in general and even schools function. (Staff Development Coordinator, College E)

> Being closed is the hardest thing to deal with. (Chief Student Services Officer, College B)

In the corporate arena, Senge proposed using tools such as scenarios, mapping, and internal boards of directors to help surface mental models and to encourage reflective thinking and inquiry (Senge, 1990, p. 187). In community colleges, there are some tools and trends that can help colleges achieve similar results. The most prominent tool is shared governance; the most useful trend is the movement toward interdisciplinary studies. The two are not separate events, but related aspects of the most current reform movement in higher education (see chapter 2).

Though the impetus for shared governance as a legislated way of doing business in community colleges mostly reflected faculty concerns over what they perceived to be their diminishing power, it nevertheless established a mechanism to ensure broad and representative input into decision-making collegewide. The practical result was that fresh and formerly unheard perspectives – new mental models – were brought to the table. Combined with an increasingly diverse faculty and staff population, the effect was to greatly increase the potential for colleges to think outside the box in all aspects of operations and policy. Whether that would occur, however, would also be dependent upon the participants possessing a set of critical thinking and communication skills, among them the ability to balance inquiry and advocacy. "Advocacy without inquiry

begets more advocacy. . . .What is needed is blending advocacy and inquiry to promote collaborative learning" (Senge, 1990, p. 198).

In respect to balancing inquiry and advocacy, community colleges find themselves at a juncture, one that has been faced periodically in higher education. That juncture is a choice between adhering to traditional disciplinary divisions or choosing to organize information, teaching, and learning along more interdisciplinary lines. This is a classic conundrum for higher education, one that has become increasingly more of a challenge as it becomes less and less possible in the Information Age to be familiar with, much less master, everything there is to know about a given subject. Moreover, the complexity of the problems which confront society today and the pace at which they occur make it nearly impossible for any single discipline to provide a solution. Multiple approaches and extensive collaboration are required to resolve global issues such as ethnic and religious conflicts, crime, drug use, AIDS, homelessness, and child abuse, to name a few.

In community colleges, long accustomed to being underfunded or inconsistently funded, faculty, staff, and administrators have learned very well the need to advocate for their programs and services. This practical advocacy is in addition to already strong ties to their disciplines. As more than one participant observed, faculty are not really hired by the college; they are hired by their departments, and the departments are their real home. While advocacy is expected and is important, its goal is essentially to win: the argument, the funding, the full-time staff. Advocacy by itself is not designed to find the best argument or the best solution for the institution as a whole. Despite the strong

disciplinary ties for most faculty, there was a high level of awareness on the part of interviewees – faculty, staff, and administrators – that blurring disciplinary lines was one means of achieving their goal to improve student success, and not coincidentally, organizational strength. As one faculty member (College C) bluntly stated, "Departments are an evil thing." A number of interviewees commented that if they were to be successful in achieving their goals as both a learning college and a learning organization, one outward manifestation of that success would be more interdisciplinary programs and a more holistic approach to student success. Essentially, they were talking about the need to "unlearn" in order to create change.

> I would know [if we were successful] by a great shift to interdisciplinary studies. [That would be] an outward sign of change. Individual change is harder to assess. There would be collaboration, varying approaches, more awareness of learning theory and styles. (Chief Executive Officer, College F)

> Cross disciplinary kinds of things is [sic] what starts to create excitement. . . You learn an awful lot from your colleagues. . . . As faculty talk across disciplines, it is absolutely wonderful to watch this because they, faculty, are learning. (Chief Instructional Officer, College D)

Staff development coordinators spoke of the desirability – and the difficulties – of encouraging interaction across disciplines and among constituencies – faculty, staff, and administrators. A tension existed between a desire to increase contact, to "mix people up," and to recognize that different groups have different needs, perhaps not so much in terms of skills but certainly in terms of content.

> Look at the title changes in our job descriptions [of staff development coordinators in a regional, intersegmental consortium]. . . Now [we're

> called] Director of Staff and Institutional or Organizational Development. Most of us have moved into these roles. You start to look at the whole institution. . . classified, faculty, and administration. . . . We're more aware of institutional needs as a whole. When you start to talk about a learning institution or learning organization or learning college, . . . you can't ignore the fact that it's a global kind of a thing. (Staff Development Coordinator, College D)

> Some of [the District Staff Development] Committee felt that it was more important to have the vertical slice [three units: two colleges and administrative services] than it was to have the horizontal slice [managers, classified, certificated]. . .because [each unit] knows [its] needs and. . . they may very well be different. Therefore it makes more sense for us to develop staff development at each of the units. And I'm thinking, what does this do to the community of learners? . . .It violates everything that I see as community of learners because. . . the community for me is the whole district. (Staff Development Coordinator, College F)

Personal Mastery

> Organizations learn only through individuals who learn. Individual learning does not guarantee organizational learning. But without it no organizational learning occurs. (Senge, 1990, p. 139)

Personal mastery, according to Senge, is grounded in competence and skills, but it is more than competence and skills, more even than spiritual awareness. "It means approaching one's life as a creative work, living life from a creative as opposed to reactive viewpoint" (Senge, 1990, p. 141). Its foundation rests on two processes: (a) continually clarifying what is important, and (b) continually learning how to see current reality more clearly. It is the difference between current reality (what is) and vision (what we want). Senge described this difference as "creative tension." The purpose of

personal mastery is learning how to generate and sustain creative tension (Senge, 1990, pp. 141-142).

If the results of the six case studies conducted for this dissertation are representative, community colleges are excellent incubators for personal mastery or proficiency. As Senge explained, people with a high level of personal mastery have a special sense of purpose, a deep sense of responsibility. For them, a vision is a calling. Current reality is less a threat than an ally, and people with personal mastery have learned to work with, not against, change. They are connected to others. They are quick and inquisitive and in a continual learning mode. In fact, personal mastery is not a thing to be possessed, but an ongoing process, a lifelong discipline. These are qualities that emerged over and over in the course of the interviews conducted for this study.

> I would measure [success in being a learning institution] first of all by the excitement of the people who comprise the institution. . . [how they] feel about their professional lives. Are they engaged? Are they continuing to learn? Are they applying what they've learned to improve our effectiveness in delivering on our mission, student learning? . . . It's like taking a temperature. It's the most important sign of health and vitality: how those who comprise the institution are presently positioned to support that institution's continued development. (Chief Executive Officer, College E)

> We want people to be, above all, innovative, willing to try new things [and] willing to learn about learning theory. . . I want faculty to be scholars about learning as well as about their discipline and to be free to try new things, new ways to promote student learning. (Chief Executive Officer, College C)

> If I really think of what learning means to me, it means continual, never ending. ...We can never really be there because to say we had reached being a learning college, we'd be no longer learning. (Staff Development Coordinator, College C)

There is a distinct relationship between the organization and the employee. It can take two basic forms: contractual and covenantal. The contractual form is most common. According to DePree, it is the "*quid pro quo* of working together" (DePree, 1989, p 58), but a contractual relationship is not the glue that holds organizations together in periods of change and conflict. As a legal instrument, it does little or nothing to enhance the organization's capacity or the individual's potential. An alternative to a contractual relationship is a covenantal one, which "rests on shared commitment to ideas, to issues, to values, to goals, and to management processes" (DePree, 1989, p. 60). Covenants are an expression of relationships, the glue that holds organizations together in times of stress. Equally important, a covenantal relationship is one that supports growth. People meet and exceed their goals and objectives because they want to, not because they are required to. They are committed to the institution and its goals, and the institution is committed to them.

Based on the information collected during the case studies, one conclusion is that the relationship between community colleges and their employees is more covenantal than contractual. Certainly for many faculty and administrators, this appeared to be the case, though every college reported its cadre of disaffected, usually older faculty who were no longer fully engaged in the college. Comments of classified staff, however, indicated that for them, the relationship was more contractual than it was for faculty and administrators. In part, this might have been a reflection of the fact that all classified employees in the six colleges were unionized. It might also have been a reflection of some ambiguity and ambivalence about the role of classified staff in a learning college.

Classified staff interviewed for this study were generally aware of their colleges' missions. That may have been because those staff who were interviewed were classified senate or union representatives and thus especially active in college governance. They were also clear that they had a role to play in creating a learning college and that they could contribute toward student success in concrete ways, although like their faculty counterparts, there were some who would not or could not engage in the discussion. If there was dissonance between employee groups, it was most evident between faculty and classified staff, not faculty and administration or classified staff and administration.

This was an issue in particular for one college in the study. That college's academic senate president observed that the college had at least two definitions of a learning community, one supported by the administration and one supported by the faculty. From the administration's point of view, everyone – faculty, students, administrators, and staff – had an equally important role to play in student learning. The college's president recounted running into a facilities employee who told him that during a recent staff meeting, the staff talked about how they could support the "learning college thing." They decided that their contribution could be clean classrooms. To the president, that was a clear indication of success.

According to that college's senate president, faculty felt that the administration's perspective was unrealistic in terms of the roles of the student, the teacher, and the staff in the learning process.

> We bump heads with administration who want to think faculty and students share learning, but faculty think only the student can be responsible for his learning and all the teacher can do is set an

> environment conducive to learning. . . . I'm not sure administration or staff understands their role. . . . The classified staff – it's going over their heads. Our president's philosophy is everybody plays a role in the student's learning including the classified staff, but the staff don't know what that role is or how it's defined or what they're supposed to do. (Academic Senate President, College D)

From the point of view of the college's classified staff,

> there is a lot of dissention between faculty and staff as far as the learning college and we still don't have the same definition. The definition faculty and administration have is more oriented toward accountability factors. We're certainly headed there...but we (classified staff) are not focused strictly on accountability factors. (Classified Staff, College D)

Another manifestation of the uneasy partnership between faculty and classified staff was the issue of whether to coordinate and implement staff development activities by constituency – faculty, staff, and administrators – or whether to include everyone under one umbrella. Most colleges had an unwritten policy that any group can attend any activity, regardless of intended audience. Usually, the colleges offered a mixture of combined and separate activities.

One staff development coordinator observed that the field was beginning to reflect a more institutionwide approach. "Now [we're called] Director of Staff and Institutional or Organizational Development. Most of us have moved into these roles. You start to look at the whole institution. . . classified, faculty, and administration. . . . We're more aware of institutional needs as a whole" (Staff Development Coordinator, College D). Two coordinators viewed staff development from a functional perspective, noting that the needs of campus groups might differ in terms of content but were fairly similar in terms of skills such as technology, communication, and team building.

Nevertheless, whether and how to coordinate the groups remained an issue at several other colleges in the study that were trying to determine how best to organize professional development activities campuswide.

> Our staff development – we're really looking at how we can do that better. We have not had a coordinated way. There are staff development activities going on all over the place. We have not developed a mechanism for capturing all the things that are being done. (Academic Senate President, College E)

Personal mastery has another critical component: the importance of truth. If a college needs to balance what it wants to become against what it currently is, then it must have a reasonably accurate picture of what is. If current reality is to be more ally than enemy, "an accurate, insightful view of current reality is as important as a clear vision" (Senge, 1990, p. 155). The issue of accurate reality was prominent in the discussions that took place on the campuses included in this study. Specifically, educators were concerned about their access to accurate information.

One academic senate president stressed the importance of credibility in a shared governance system. Credibility for him as the faculty representative was a function of having and acting upon correct information. "My job is to provide correct information, to build trust. . . .Bad information has to be addressed with good information." He credited his experience in Vietnam with his belief in the importance of information: "Knowing who you're getting your information from, knowing your goal and agenda and what you'll have to do to get there, knowing who your team is, [is critical]" (Academic Senate President, College A).

The chief instructional officer of another college was equally convinced about the need to both possess and use information.

> [We need the] ability to understand and to use information to drive or inform arguments. . . that every argument is based on use of information. [Now] we don't expect information to be used. Goals and objectives are used to sanctify what you want. . . [But] everything rests on available information, assessment, and evaluation. (Chief Instructional Officer, College B)

Classified staff at one college felt that there was not an overwhelming amount of trust anywhere. They attributed the lack of trust to "the feeling that you don't have all the information" (Classified staff, College A).

Information is vital to a learning organization. Its availability is a manifestation of the strength of the organization's ability to communicate. It is the central challenge of any organization to ensure that its members not only have access to information, but also be able to make use of it. Higher education has a dual interest in the subject of information and information systems. Given the need to develop lifelong learning skills among highly specialized workers, colleges and universities will need to be able to provide relevant and accessible training not only in the technical skills required for information management systems, but also in workplace skills such as collaboration, team building, and communication. Colleges and universities are also organizations themselves and highly complex ones. Although culturally different from corporations, their need for information and information systems is no less than that of corporations.

> Universities contrast greatly with mainline utilitarian organizations and have been described as organized anarchies...universities are likely to have problematic goals, unclear technologies, and fluid participation in

> decision making. Inertia is high in universities. Most issues are of little consequence to the members as a whole, and decisions depend on who happens to be involved at the time they have to be made. There is a weak base of information available. Effective leadership requires managing unobtrusively, providing arenas for discussing a wide variety of problems, facilitating the participation of opposing points of view, and persisting in attempts to accomplish objectives despite the inertia. (Bass, 1990, p. 577)

In chapter 2, four academic cultures were described by Bergquist (1992): collegial, managerial, developmental, and negotiating. They exist simultaneously and interdependently, according to Bergquist, but one is usually predominant. All four cultures need information, but especially the developmental. The developmental culture is a culture that finds meaning primarily in the creation of programs and activities furthering the personal and professional growth of all members of the collegiate community. In a developmental culture, developmentalists insist that all members have access to the maximum amount of information. The needs of a developmental culture in academe as defined by Bergquist are strikingly similar to those of a learning organization as defined by Senge:

> Information is inherently valuable to individuals and organizations, according to the developmentalists. They believe that only through the introduction of new information that somehow calls into question an individual's or organization's current self perceptions will "unfreezing" take place, as a precondition to real learning and change. Information is similarly required to preserve authenticity in relationship. . . . Information about one's own behavior, according to the developmentalists, is essential if one is to continue to mature and become more successful in organizational settings. (Bergquist, 1992, p. 116)

While professional development activities can certainly provide faculty and staff with the information they need to perform their jobs as optimally as possible and thus move the college further toward achieving its mission, providing information is not the principal function of professional development. In the Information Age, the principal function of professional development is to provide instruction in the skills of retrieving and evaluating information. Only in that way can professional development help create and sustain an organization of learners who are independently capable of seeking and managing information on their own and as they need it.

In respect to information, the institution's responsibility is at least threefold. First, it must establish and support the information systems by which information is available for decision-making. Second, it must support a culture of evidence and inquiry by insisting that information be used in decision-making processes. And third, it must provide a means by which newly learned information can be fed back into the system and evaluated. For example, one staff member recalled a workshop wherein faculty were asked to implement classroom assessment techniques (CATs) developed by Cross and Angelo. He was impressed at the large impact seemingly very small projects could have. For about one third of the participants, something extraordinary had happened in their teaching, and he wondered how anything could have that kind of power. He concluded that in those cases, teachers got feedback they could trust. The same could be true for organizations, he reasoned, if the concept of classroom research were "ramped up" to the organizational level. "When we get that feedback, it will be like a 'duh'" (Staff, College C). This capability is critical to community colleges now that the demand for

accountability and outcomes has resulted in the adoption in 1998 of the state's first performance-based funding model in higher education.

When Senge talked about truth, he spoke less to the issue of information and more to the issue of structural conflicts, that is, ways in which we filter reality, our invisible paradigms that affect our attitudes and behavior. Senge echoed Wheatley when he spoke of recognizing the "interdependencies between actions and our reality, to see more and more of our connectedness to the world around us" (Senge, 1990, p. 170). Senge made the important point that any attempt to foster personal growth must come as the result of individual choice. It cannot be prescribed by an organization if it is to be a meaningful and positive experience. For a community college instructor required to attend a Flex Day activity on shifting the learning paradigm, it is not simply a professional issue. Given the nature of the teaching and the learning experience, it must also be very personal. Failure of the organization or the planning members to recognize this fact could account for the negative reactions of faculty, staff, and administrators to presentations on the learning paradigm, for example:

> Some faculty think you can't separate teaching and learning, like an egg – yolk and white. Others see a difference. Faculty thought Flex Day [which included a presentation on the learning paradigm] was a total waste of their time. They have already come to the conclusion that we're a learning community and they don't need to do anything any differently. (Academic Senate President, College D)

> Some [of our faculty] bought into the learning paradigm right away. . . . I think the vast majority have not bought into that yet. It's sort of like "I'm not sure what you're saying." When we say, "We're focused on learning," they're hearing what's wrong with teaching and we have to keep talking about this. It doesn't mean you're doing anything wrong. It

> just means the students aren't learning as well as we think they could and what could we do to help? (Chief Executive Officer, College D)

> I recall the last Flex Day we had the man that came from that college – one of the gurus for the learning idea – from [College]. What really irritated me was that we have a lot further to go to convince classified that we are all involved in the education of the student. I was really disappointed because I went to the presentation. . . .He was not good. . . turned people off. (Classified, College D)

What can an organization do to promote personal mastery, especially an institution of higher education? Senge suggested that institutions could create climates that support inquiry and permit people to safely create visions. One of the administrators interviewed for this study provided some practical suggestions, among them being careful to lay the groundwork for the discussion and acknowledging the experiences of the faculty and staff.

> I read Senge right after the incident and sensed the importance of a learning institution to the president. It helped explain a worthy thing that had not worked. We hadn't set principles of a learning institution in place. . . I'd have him come after they'd been prepared and get them (faculty) to tell me there was a shift. (Chief Instructional Officer, College B)

Second, Senge suggested that leaders within the organization could model their own quests for personal mastery. The effect of leadership on the development of a learning organization is profound (Lashway, 1998; Joyce & Calhoun, 1996). At every college, the importance of stable, credible, supportive, and exemplary leadership was reinforced as a critical factor in the college's progress. As one chief instructional officer (College A) noted, "It's a philosophy, and if it is practiced (modeled), people will trust it. [It] takes modeling and time to build credibility."

> Every time our president changes, our culture seems to change. (Academic Senate President, College D)

> Our Superintendent/President feels strongly about hiring. He looks for innovation, creativity, commitment to advancement of the organization beyond that discipline expertise. I see the merit of that. He is looking at the organization as a whole. (Academic Senate President, College E)

> The main thing that has to happen, what's fundamental is . . . a climate of trust and confidence in your leadership. . . . It's all about relationships. . . . confidence, a climate of trust, and excellent communication are paramount. (Chief Instructional Officer, College E)

> I think leadership can make or break a college. [People] say a college has its own inner dynamics. Well, it does, but what a president lays over the whole thing makes an incredible difference. (Classified Staff, College A)

Team Learning

Chief among the skills mentioned by interviewees as most important in reaching the organizational mission was the ability to work in teams. The team approach to decision-making and problem-solving in community colleges is especially strong, reinforced as it is by shared governance. Another reason – or perhaps effect – is the growing interest in interdisciplinary studies, which require faculty to work with colleagues outside their discipline. Senge defined team learning as "the process of aligning and developing the capacity of a team to create the results its members truly desire" (Senge, 1990, p. 236). It builds on the disciplines of shared vision and personal mastery. The concept of alignment is fundamental to team learning. Alignment is "when

a group of people function as a whole" (Senge, 1990, p. 234). Unaligned teams tend to waste energy as members work at cross purposes with one another.

Team learning is critical to a learning organization. While individual learning is important, it does not necessarily mean that the organization learns. However, if a team learns, Senge asserted "they become a microcosm for learning throughout the organization" (Senge, 1990, p. 236). Essential to successful team learning is the ability to master the skills of discussion and dialogue and to understand when one is the preferred tool over the other. Discussion, unlike dialogue, connotes winning; one viewpoint prevails over another. Discussion can be a useful tool for analyzing a situation. The purpose of dialogue, however, is "to go beyond any one individual's understanding" (Senge, 1990, p. 241). There is no winning or losing, only finding the best solution. Dialogue is more effective for exploring complex issues, for arriving at new ideas. For true dialogue to take place, Senge (1990, pp. 238-249) quoted three conditions drawn from the work of Bohm (1965) and Bohm and Peat (1987):

1. Assumptions must be suspended.
2. Participants must treat each other as colleagues.
3. There must be a facilitator.

What ensures team learning is practice in two skills: (a) practicing dialogue and (b) creating "microworlds" or computer models. Software exists for creating simulations. One example is STELLA, developed by High Performance Systems (*http://www.hps-inc.com/*), though it appears to be minimally, if at all used to simulate systems thinking and building in the California community college system (e-mail survey to CA

community college institutional researchers, March 1999). Where colleges put their efforts in team learning is in practicing dialogue and related skills such as facilitating effective meetings. For the community colleges in this study, these skills fell into the categories of team building, group work, interpersonal skills, and communication skills, the last being most strongly emphasized: "Communication. That's just flat it" (Classified Staff, College D). They were frequently mentioned as skills which had been highlighted in professional development activities for faculty, staff, and administrators.

As noted above, community colleges are well positioned to provide an environment in which team learning skills can be developed. Not only does the shared governance model support team learning, but recent trends in curriculum design emphasizing interdisciplinary studies require more interaction among faculty in different disciplines. Another reinforcement for team learning skills among faculty and staff is the current expectation, based on research in cognitive and adult learning theory, that classroom activities will be more participatory, interactive, and collaborative. Team approaches to problem-solving are emphasized. Faculty who acquire the skills to design such learning experiences and implement them in their classrooms may well come to expect the same skills to be employed at the organizational level.

Systems Thinking

Senge's fifth discipline, systems thinking, is the cornerstone for all five disciplines, all of which involve a shift from seeing parts to seeing wholes. Systems thinking is what Senge proposed to replace the illusion that "the world is created of

separate, unrelated forces" (Senge, 1990, p 3). Systems thinking is a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge and a set of tools which help to identify the patterns within and between individual systems. These patterns are not simple, linear cause-and-effect relationships but interrelationships, perhaps best illustrated as a web. Systems thinking is about focusing on the patterns and the processes (dynamic complexity) as opposed to discrete snapshots in time (detail complexity). Since systems thinking does not promote a linear cause-and-effect model, the locus of responsibility shifts from a single individual or agent to everyone involved in the process.

Feedback becomes especially important in systems thinking, and Senge identified two types: balancing and reinforcing. Balancing feedback is feedback that moderates or inhibits growth, acting much as brakes on a car. Balancing feedback seeks stability, but it is often difficult to recognize when this type of feedback is in effect because of one other characteristic of systems: delays. Delays occur when the effect of one variable on another takes time. It may appear as though nothing is happening but, in fact, the system may be actively resisting change and attempting to return to the status quo. Since systems thinking is usually oriented toward the long-term, delays are commonplace. They make it difficult to recognize when balancing feedback is in effect. They also create a separation between cause and effect, between action and consequences. This is a familiar situation in education. The lesson presented today may have no impact or use for days, weeks, months, or years. One academic senate president (College A) observed that there is a "delay between action and reaction. Outcomes [are] not always clearly connected to inputs." In effect, learning, which one participant identified as " a relatively

permanent change in behavior as a result of practice and experience" (faculty, College C), may not occur in a measurable time frame. It is one of the reasons faculty were skeptical about the current emphasis on measuring student outcomes. If real learning is so difficult to measure, the only alternative is to use what one institutional researcher referred to as "proxies," for example, course grades and number of degrees and certificates awarded.

Unlike balancing feedback, reinforcing feedback is an amplification process that results in growth. For any organization, reinforcing feedback, including assessment and evaluation, is a critical component of the planning process. This is equally true for educational organizations, but delays are just one of the factors which make the process at the organizational level, as well as at the classroom level, very complicated. Although most of the colleges in the sample had developed strategic plans, every college acknowledged that reinforcing feedback, assessment, and evaluation were the weakest components of their planning processes.

> That's the one thing we don't do here is really plan much and we don't evaluate things. I have no idea how you'd do that. . . .I don't have a clue. (Academic Senate President, College C)

> [There are] two types of feedback. One is the organization is supposed to produce learning and. . . whether we're improving at producing learning over time. We don't have that. The closest we can come is measurements of success and learning proxies (e.g., graduation rates, transfer rates, course completion rates, retention, etc.). When it comes to staff learning things relative to changing organizational designs, we don't have any feedback loop. (Staff, College C)

> We all need research skills in the broad sense of that term. . . always thinking in terms of feedback on the results. [The speaker cited a recent

> college study that showed a new series of student success skills courses made no difference in terms of any measures that count, for example, course completion rates. He noted that "the college was not set up to take this result seriously.] We don't have a culture of evidence. The notion of changing the system is not accepted. Unconsciously, the view is [that] this system doesn't change. You can add to it [but] you can't change it. (Staff, College C)

> On the feedback loop, I feel we have really deteriorated because of staff limitations. (Chief Executive Officer, College E).

Staff development coordinators likewise indicated concern about the assessment and evaluation of staff development programs.

> [College goals and staff development are linked] but I would like to see it linked more so. . . . People self-identify whether they need training or maybe their manager [recommends it] and then we don't assess it at all. That goes against everything I've ever learned about how to do training . . . if you want to get serious about improving performance. (Staff Development Coordinator, College E)

> All this money goes through and no one tells me what they did. . . [unless they informally tell their department or dean]. . . . I would love to have a more comprehensive evaluation of the [local] program. . . . There's a huge hunk of this that really we don't even know how effective it is as far as the whole organization is going. (Staff Development Coordinator, College A)

Assessment of learning does pose challenges for higher education, but failure to routinely assess and evaluate changes, whether they be at the classroom or organization level may also reflect the fact that higher education resembles what Deal and Kennedy (1982) called a process culture. Deal and Kennedy proposed that the world of business could be divided into four broad and not mutually exclusive categories: (a) tough-guy macho culture; (b) work hard/play hard culture; (c) bet-your-company culture; and (d) process culture.

Deal and Kennedy defined a process culture[2] as "a world of little or no feedback where employees find it hard to measure what they do; instead they concentrate on how it's done" (1982, p. 108). They suggested that another term for process culture taken to the extreme is *bureaucracy*. Process cultures are low-risk, slow-feedback environments that typically include heavily regulated industries and service organizations. They are low-risk because no one action is liable to make or break the organization. As a result, there is little or no feedback, which forces employees to focus more on how they do something, not what they do (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 119). They value technical perfection. Their tendency is to be protective and cautious. In times of crisis, often the result of political whim, employees tend to "hunker down" and wait out the storm. Rituals in the process culture focus on work patterns and procedures. An inordinate amount of time is spent discussing process, especially if it involves any kind of reorganization of the system. Titles and classifications become more important than money, and the physical surroundings, such as office size, sophistication of equipment, and furniture are very visible indicators of one's position in the hierarchy.

There is nothing inherently good or bad about a process culture. They exist, as Deal and Kennedy pointed out, because there are many functions society needs to have performed reliably and accurately. Process cultures serve as a kind of counterbalance to the other, riskier cultures. Good process cultures, according to Deal and Kennedy, "make

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[2] Reckmeyer (e-mail, 4/99) argued that what Deal and Kennedy called a process culture is more aptly termed a "procedure culture." He distinguished between two kinds of process. The first is process as a blind following of procedures, what Deal and Kennedy called a bureaucracy. The second is process as "a conscious refinement of work, or getting things done effectively and efficiently, with attention to the subtleties and humanities involved"

sure the world works" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 123). Process cultures, however, are no more immune to change than any other culture, although it may take a process culture much longer to respond. The attributes that contribute to a good process culture's strength – accuracy, reliability, emphasis on process – are the very attributes that threaten its ability to adapt. Senge likewise noted that emphasis on process as opposed to result is problematic for organizations.

> Focusing on the desired intrinsic result is a skill...it is ...a sign of lack of discipline when thoughts about "the process" of achieving our vision continually crowd out our focus on the outcomes we seek. We must work at learning how to separate what we truly want from what we think we need to do in order to achieve it. (Senge, 1990, p. 164)

Community colleges are mainly process cultures, but the message from without the system is that they must be less process-oriented and more outcomes-oriented. This expectation is complicated by the fact that shared governance, the mechanism for decision-making, is a process that is at once admirably suited to a learning organization, but can also prove to be one of its primary obstacles. No college questioned the concept of shared governance. In colleges where shared governance had been well defined and where viable governace structures had been put into place, employees were optimistic about the process. At the same time, however, a common theme emerged: Shared governance is not the most efficient governance model. As external pressures for change mount and create internal pressure to respond, the tendency to focus on the *how* as opposed to the *what* means that the pressure only continues to build. One answer to the dilemma is to provide employees with the skills that make it possible to identify problems, expose assumptions, pursue constructive lines of inquiry, and reach consensus

on plans of action as efficiently as possible. The next section discusses what the research for this study revealed about the principal system by which community colleges could provide these skills – professional development.

Professional Development in the Community Colleges

> Human capital. That's what we work with every day. Every person in your organization is responsible for learning, for progressing, and for sharing that information with others, so that's a concept we're trying to foster. . . .Human capital is a resource to be valued. (Staff Development Coordinator, College D)

As is so often the case in higher education, the terminology used to describe professional development is not consistent. Terms change because of changes within the discipline or, as discussed above, because an individual college needs to change the terms to better fit the concepts into its culture. *Staff* development presents some problems for those colleges which clearly distinguish between staff, faculty, and administrators and which typically separate professional development activities for each constituency. *Professional* development is more encompassing but can sometimes be confused with professional growth and development programs, which are usually negotiated processes for the purpose of advancing on the salary scale. The 3-year plan filed with the state is not called a *staff* development plan but a *human resources* development plan. At least one staff development coordinator noted that titles are beginning to change. The role of the Staff Development Coordinator is expanding, and he is now called Director of Staff and Organizational Development. The shift suggests that professional development is

being viewed from an institutionwide perspective (Staff Development Coordinator, College D). Webb (1996) cited Warren Piper's (1994) observation that within the last 20 years, the focus of development in higher education has shifted. Initially, it focused on improvement of the instructional process at the individual level. Now, however, development models are more broadly oriented toward management and policy issues to support organizational change (Webb, 1996, p. 2). In this study, *professional development* is used, although the focus is on faculty.

All California community colleges have a professional development program per AB 1725 (see chapter 2). It is funded through two sources of money: AB1725 staff development funds and the Technology Training Infrastructure Program (TTIP). Both are allocated on a formula basis. These funds are in turn distributed by the colleges in a variety of ways. Some colleges use formulas to determine how much staff development money goes toward Flex Day activities versus conferences, for example. Others have agreed upon set amounts that go directly to departments and divisions for distribution. Actual processes for distribution may vary somewhat from division to division. As noted in chapter 2, colleges supplement these funds with their own money in the form of sabbaticals, professional growth and development programs, and conferences. These amounts are usually negotiated through the collective bargaining processes, if one exists. There are also other sources of funds from grants, and of course, faculty and staff may elect to pay for their own training. Finally, considerable informal training and professional development can take place as employees share ideas with one another.

Time spent in such collaboration should be considered time supported by the institution, though there is no viable way to monitor that kind of activity.

How best to structure professional development to meet the needs not only of individual constituencies but also of the institution itself is a discussion topic for nearly half of the colleges included in this study. One college in a single college district created a special team to identify all the various types of training that were occurring on the campus and to recommend whether and how those activities might be better organized and made more accessible to employees. Two other colleges, both in multi-college districts, were discussing the relationship between the district and the colleges in terms of coordination and delivery of professional development. At one of these colleges, the most recent proposal was to separate faculty and staff. At the other, the possibility of housing all training (e.g., computer skills, district procedures) within district human resources was being discussed. Each of the two colleges in the district, however, would continue to manage its own professional development programs to ensure that local needs were addressed.

Another organizational factor is the coordinator's position. Aside from title, there are some important issues to be addressed if colleges make the development of their human resources a priority. One of those issues is the time and resources provided for the task. With the exception of one district-level coordinator who served two colleges and central services full-time, the other coordinators were filling the role on a part-time basis, for which they were given either a stipend or reassigned time. Reassigned time ranged from nothing to 60%.

Coordinators tended to be very active in college life and governance. In addition to coordinating staff development, their other duties included major responsibilities such as Academic Senate Vice President, Curriculum Committee Chair, Department Chair, and union representative. If they were instructors, most taught at least one course. Most had at least part-time clerical support and designated office space. As for reporting structures, coordinators usually reported directly to the president or the chief instructional officer or other vice president. Most had been in their roles for an average of three years.

Their reasons for accepting the assignment ranged from interest in the topic to friendly coercion on the part of colleagues to a desire to gain administrative and budget experience. At least one coordinator noted the fragility of the system, which was almost totally dependent upon him. He wondered what would happen to the momentum he has generated when he eventually leaves the position.

The single most important issue in this area, however, may be that of staff development specifically for staff development coordinators. Those coordinators interviewed for this study indicated they could see that staff development needed to change, to become more comprehensive and more appropriately organized to support the strategic paths their colleges had chosen.

As discussed above, three of the colleges in the study were in the process of reviewing their staff development programs. In addition, coordinators indicated they were aware that there is a body of knowledge and skills specific to human resource development, but in no case had coordinators received any training for their new roles,

though one coordinator possessed a degree in human resource management that he had earned prior to his being reassigned to his current position.

> I had no training. I just volunteered. I wanted administrative experience. (Staff Development Coordinator, College A)

> People are actually trained as staff developers. I'm not a trained staff developer and it's one of the things . . .I was. . . frustrated about. . . . I hear lip service that staff development is very important. Why don't we put our money where our mouth is?. . . We do belong to the [staff development] organizations, but nobody goes to the meetings. (Staff Development Coordinator, College B)

If they acquired training, it was on their own volition. For example, one coordinator (College F) took classes in human resource development at a local university for his own professional growth and development project.

What can organizations that purport to be learning-centered do to ensure that their employees, their single biggest investment, are provided with the optimum learning opportunities? First, it is a question of priority. Staff development programs are perceived by some colleges to be add-ons, not integral to the operation and future growth of the institution. Their approach to staff development is one of compliance. Second, it is a question of resources. With the improved budget picture for California community colleges, funding is less of an issue, which is not to say that it is not an issue. As noted in chapter 2, the AB1725 staff development budget has not been augmented since it was first approved in 1988. The addition of technology training funds (TTIP) has helped, and as noted earlier, colleges fund a variety of formal and informal professional development

activities. At this time, money is not perceived to be the major problem. The biggest problem, though obviously related to money, is far more complex. It is time.

When lack of time is a factor in the progress of any organizational endeavor, it calls into question the organization's priorities, but as Senge pointed out, there are also other reasons. Senge referred to the work of Schön whose book, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (1983), examined the phenomenon of expecting instant action. Schön attributed this mindset to the public school system, which does not encourage time for reflection. Rather, the day is parsed into small pieces of time during which students are expected to absorb as much information as possible and then move on to the next subject. Successful learners, according to Schön, learn to think on their feet, to reflect in action. For many administrators, faculty, and staff in the community colleges, the need to reflect in action is a necessary skill but not an easy one to master or sustain.

> A problem that we have is people having time to do things, for example, planning activities in staff development. . . . I get no reassigned time. . . I'm not the best person to do this because I don't have the time to do it . . . We have some ideas, some energy but no time. (Staff Development Coordinator, College B)

However, Senge observed that even if time were provided for reflection – for learning – research has demonstrated that managers do not take advantage of it.

> Typically, managers in the experiments adopt a strategy, then as soon as the strategy starts to run into problems, they switch to another strategy, then to another and another. In a simulated four-year exercise, managers may run through three to six different strategies, without *once* examining why a strategy seems to be failing or articulating specifically what they hope to accomplish through a change in strategy. Apparently, the

> "ready, fire, aim" atmosphere of American corporations has been fully assimilated and internalized by those who live in that atmosphere. (Senge, 1990, p. 304)

For many American workers and their managers, activity is a sign of productivity, in the same way that a messy desk is a sign that work is getting done. Incessant activity is often mistaken for incisive activity (Senge, 1990, p. 305).

"Learning takes time" (Senge, 1990, p. 304). Senge's observation coincides with what is now known about adult learning (see chapter 2). Therefore, what is necessary to encourage organizational learning is both time to reflect – to learn – and the modeled expectation that reflection can and should take place. For community colleges, it is linked to the paradigm shift in the learning revolution, where the focus is not on teaching but learning. It is not a question of measuring how much time an instructor spends lecturing in the classroom, but a question of what students have learned and are able to demonstrate.

One of the systemic assumptions which supports this view is that teaching is the principal activity of faculty and other tasks take the form of reassigned time. That is, they are defined as secondary to the teaching function. Yet if community colleges are truly learning institutions, then the time faculty and staff spend in organizational activities that support the learning goal should be considered equal to, albeit different from, the classroom assignment. If colleges want to encourage their faculty and staff to learn organizational skills and use them to improve processes and eventually improve learning, then they must be acknowledged as important in real terms. There must be a formal expectation that reflection and assessment and evaluation – double-loop learning –

take place, and time must be made available. It is true that there are only so many hours in a day, and only so many which can be productively devoted to work, but Senge's point is that organizations must look at how time is managed – or not. "The way each of us and each of our close colleagues go about managing our own time will say a good deal about our commitment to learning" (Senge, 1990, p. 305). The implications for community colleges can range from instituting simple time management techniques, providing opportunities for flexible scheduling or – a more radical approach – reexamining the traditional semester structure and typical faculty work year.

In this chapter, the findings from six case studies of community colleges as learning organizations have been examined from the perspective of Senge's five disciplines: systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision, and team learning. Discussed first was the issue of terminology, which was a complicating factor throughout this study. Also noted was the tendency for colleges not to think of themselves as learning organizations and their faculty, staff, and administrators as learners. Many colleges consciously avoided using terms associated with systems thinking or the learning revolution because the terms had negative connotations, especially for faculty. Thus, it was not readily apparent that colleges did, in fact, value many of the characteristics of a learning organization as described by Senge. For example, they repeatedly emphasized their preference for colleagues who would remain vital, interested, and open to change and who possessed the requisite communication skills.

The sixth and final chapter summarizes the findings of the study, presents conclusions, makes recommendations for action based on the findings, and offers suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Summary

This study was conducted to determine whether and how California community colleges that have formally committed to the goal of becoming learning-centered colleges are preparing their faculty and staff to be active members of such institutions. It is a timely study in that community colleges, more so than any other segment of higher education, have entered an era of renewed calls for accountability in the form of improved student outcomes. Unlike previous calls for accountability, this time there is a specific mandate. A performance-based funding model was adopted by the California legislature in 1998, which applies to 3% of the system's total budget. The system has until 2005 to demonstrate reasonable progress in five areas: transfer, course completion, degrees and certificates, basic skills, and workforce development.

The renewed call for accountability is closely related to another aspect of the current reform movement in higher education, the learning revolution. The learning revolution represents a shift from an emphasis on the teaching process and measuring inputs (the instruction paradigm) to an emphasis on the learning process and measuring outputs (the learning paradigm). In higher education, the learning revolution is a movement that is most prevalent among the community colleges.

The drivers for accountability and the learning revolution in the 1990s are varied and complex. They include a fairly predictable swing of the pendulum in terms of higher education reform. When instructional standards appear to have weakened, as they did in the 1960s and 1970s, the usual response on the part of the public is to demand better performance, and the usual response of educators is to reassert control in the form of a more prescriptive curriculum. But public concern is not solely the result of problems in education. The pace of change quickened dramatically in the 1980s and 1990s. The most obvious indicator has been the advances in technology that catapulted society from the Industrial Age to the Information Age. The recession that struck the country, and especially California, had a significant impact on higher education, which was expected to do a great deal more with a great deal less. Add to these factors the increasing number of new, nontraditional community college students with many different needs and expectations, and it is not hard to understand how turbulent the last two decades have been for colleges.

Nonetheless, community colleges have managed to remain steadfast in their perception of their mission: student success. It is a concept and a phrase which permeates the fabric of the system, so much so that the focus on student learning, as necessary and commendable as it is, sometimes prevents colleges from recognizing their own needs as learning organizations or seeing the connection between being a successful learning *organization* and being a successful learning *college*. As noted in this study, this is not entirely a "problem." The system has a solid, widely recognized, and widely accepted foundation upon which to leverage change. The challenge lies in ensuring that

faculty, staff, and administrators within the system are sufficiently prepared to plan, implement, and evaluate change not only in the classroom, but also at the organizational level. It has been persuasively argued by O'Banion (1997b) that nothing less than a complete and radical restructuring of education will improve learning; anything less is merely "trimming the branches of a dying tree" (O'Banion, 1995, p.1). To make fundamental changes in such a complex system cannot occur unless all the stakeholders possess the skills that make it possible for the organization – the college – to assess the need for change; determine the direction; select the means; implement; evaluate the outcomes; and, most critically, learn from the results. Without the final step, no organizational learning can occur, and change, no matter how positive, cannot be sustained – much less improved. Thus, the question was asked of those colleges which have formally committed to the learning concept, be that as a learning college, community, or organization: How have you prepared your staff, especially faculty, to be productive members of a learning organization?

To answer that question, it was necessary to examine a number of factors that were determined to have direct impact on the issue of community colleges as learning organizations. Literature reviews (chapters 2 and 3) were conducted on the learning revolution, systems thinking, adult development and learning theory, professional development, and AB1725, the legislation mandating staff development in the California community colleges. This information provided the theoretical basis for case studies (chapter 4) of six California community colleges whose mission statements and staff development plans indicated an institutional commitment to the concept of a learning-

centered college. Forty interviews were conducted at the six colleges. The data from those interviews were then transcribed, analyzed, sorted, and finally discussed within the framework of Peter Senge's five disciplines of a learning organization (chapter 5). Senge's framework will again be used to present most of the conclusions drawn from the study.

Conclusions

Building a Shared Vision

When one analyzes community colleges in respect to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, one of the system's major strengths is its shared vision. To a person, those interviewed for this study were very clear about what they believed the colleges' mission is: student success. Responses were consistent, whether the person was chancellor of the entire community college system, administrator, instructor, or classified staff member. It is not clear whether the process of creating a vision and/or mission statement by these colleges was the reason for such a high level of agreement. Many faculty objected to the notion that focusing on learning is a new concept and as discussed in previous chapters, faculty were easily alienated by the jargon associated with the learning revolution and with the corporate world. Many administrators concurred that in order to build the vision, it is necessary to avoid using many of the terms which have negative connotations for faculty. Nonetheless, as the interviews progressed, it became apparent that student success, in the form of student learning, was a commonly held goal. Each college, however, had different ideas as to how it could best achieve that goal, and

those ideas both reflected and were shaped by the college's own culture. Thus, the issue was not so much the vision as it was the means by which the vision could be reached. Determining where they wanted to be and what they wanted to be in the future was not the difficult part for colleges; it was the how. As community colleges engage in the visioning process, it seems critical to make this distinction early or colleges can spend a great deal of time and energy and not deal directly with those issues that are the true obstacles to progress.

Although the apparent presence of a strongly shared vision should be considered a major strength, it can be weakened, even die, if organizations are not able to maintain what Senge referred to as "creative tension," the tension between the vision and reality. There are other threats, or limiting forces as Senge called them, including dissipation of focus, lack of time, energy, and systemic thinking skills. These limiting forces are prevalent in community colleges and were much on the minds of management. More than one chief executive officer indicated that in order to support change, a fundamental restructuring of their organizations, in fact, the entire state system, would be necessary.

Mental Models

Within the community college environment, *paradigm* is the term that is used in place of mental models. Most community colleges appeared to be seriously considering the positive and the negative implications of shifting from one mental model to another. Perhaps in this case, the process is at least as important as the product. Whether a given mental model prevails may or may not have significant, long-term impact. What may

have significant and long-term impact is participants learning not only that mental models exist, but how to expose them in such a way that decision-making processes are actually made better.

To a great extent, community colleges were aware of the need to recognize and manage mental models more effectively, although they did not typically use Senge's terms to express it. Rather, it was expressed as a set of organizational skills, the most frequently mentioned of which was the ability to be open-minded. There are two aspects to this skill, two sides of the same coin. One is the need to be open to the mental models of others. The other is to be aware of one's own mental models. Community colleges are not without resources to identify and examine the different assumptions which members of the college community bring to the decision-making process. The most prominent tool is shared governance; the most useful trend is the movement toward interdisciplinary studies. Learning to balance inquiry and advocacy in the shared governance process involves the same kind of open thinking that allows faculty to operate outside the disciplinary boxes and to take advantage of the different perspectives and problem-solving tools which other disciplines have to offer. In both cases – shared governance and interdisciplinary thinking – the results can generally be expected to be greater than the sum of the parts and lead to new and improved ways of achieving institutional goals.

Personal Mastery

Personal mastery is based on two processes: (a) continually clarifying what is important; (b) continually learning how to see current reality more clearly. It is the difference between current reality (what is) and vision (what we want) or what Senge called "creative tension." The purpose of personal mastery is learning how to generate and sustain creative tension (Senge, 1990, pp. 141-142). If the results of the six case studies conducted for this dissertation are representative, community colleges are excellent incubators for personal mastery or proficiency, given the strength of their shared vision. Based on the information collected during the case studies, one conclusion is that the relationship between community colleges and their employees is more covenantal than contractual, thus indicating a high degree of reciprocal commitment between the college and its members. Again, this is a powerful foundation for building an organization capable of achieving its goals.

However, there are weaknesses, primary of which is the need for accurate information to both establish credibility and support decision-making. Colleges have the same need for accurate information as any other complex organization, but colleges are less adept at accessing the information they do have, finding ways of ensuring that it is used in decision-making, and most critical, evaluating and learning from the outcomes. Consistently, managers interviewed for this study acknowledged their weaknesses in this

area, especially in terms of reinforcing feedback. No college appeared to be satisfied with its feedback mechanisms, if they even existed.

Achieving personal mastery also depends on strong leadership to support it, and herein lies another threat for community colleges. Strong leadership is not lacking but stability is. California chief executive officers have a turnover rate (4.4 years) significantly higher than that of their counterparts nationwide (7.5-7.8 years) (Community College League of California, 1998). Changes in leadership are exacerbated if the college does not have systems in place that guarantee institutional priorities are maintained even if the leadership changes. O'Banion (1994) argued for the development of a "critical core" of faculty who can engage in innovation. "[That way] the college can survive changes in presidents" (O'Banion, 1994, p. 1). This is not to suggest that priorities might not need to be reexamined, but it is difficult for faculty, staff, and administrators to sustain a sense of progress when the course of the college can dramatically shift every 3 years. Part of this problem lies in the nature of learning wherein there is often considerable delay between the learning experience and the learning outcome. If no formal feedback mechanisms are in place, much of the learning and thus the sense of accomplishment can be lost.

Team Learning

Senge defined team learning as "the process of aligning and developing the capacity of a team to create the results its members truly desire" (Senge, 1990, p. 236). It builds on the disciplines of shared vision and personal mastery. The concept of

alignment is fundamental to team learning. Alignment is "when a group of people function as a whole" (Senge, 1990, p. 234).

Chief among the skills mentioned by interviewees as most important in reaching the organizational mission was the ability to work in teams. Community colleges are well positioned to provide an environment in which team learning skills can be developed. Not only does the shared governance model support team learning, but recent trends in curriculum design emphasizing interdisciplinary studies require more interaction among faculty in different disciplines. Another reinforcement for team learning skills among faculty and staff is the current expectation, based on research in cognitive and adult learning theory, that classroom activities will be more participatory, interactive, and collaborative. Team approaches to problem-solving are emphasized. Faculty who acquire the skills to design such learning experiences and implement them in their classrooms may well come to expect the same skills to be employed at the organizational level.

The threat for community colleges is that insufficient time is made available to support team building. It has been noted that shared governance is not especially efficient, though there are those who argue that the time spent up front to reach a decision is time that does not have to be spent down the line to make corrections. Also, working in teams, especially interdisciplinary teams, poses significant challenges in community colleges, where the teaching load is heaviest of the three segments of higher education. Like their counterparts in the university and state college systems, community colleges operate within the constraints created by traditional discipline structures that encourage

vertical stovepipe and silo thinking and discourage cross- and inter-disciplinary efforts. The success of teams within the community colleges is largely dependent upon the support provided by the college, which is itself a reflection of how much the college values such efforts. That support is most evident when colleges ensure that faculty and staff have sufficient time to acquire team building skills and to engage in team activities.

Systems Thinking

Systems thinking is what Senge proposed to replace the illusion that "the world is created of separate, unrelated forces" (Senge, 1990, p 3). Systems thinking is a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge, and a set of tools which help to identify the patterns within and between individual systems.

As noted above, feedback, especially reinforcing feedback, was the weak link for colleges attempting to become learning-centered. It appeared as though most had little idea how to establish viable feedback mechanisms. Thus, they tended to focus on perfecting other mechanisms with which they were more familiar and over which they had relatively more control, such as shared governance or data collection and storage systems. However, one staff member observed that there was no value in strengthening the already strong links of a chain; a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

Community colleges are highly complex organizations. Learning is at the heart of what they do, and there is evidence that considerable experimentation and innovation take place daily within and outside the classroom. In most cases, it appeared that colleges had little or no effective means of capturing the nature and scope of these

changes, much less measuring the outcomes. As was noted by one institutional researcher, even the outcomes measures established by the state's Partnership for Excellence program will not measure learning, only the proxies for learning, such as transfer rates. To truly measure learning requires pre- and post-assessment and evaluation. For an organization, that means consistent, ongoing assessment and evaluation of those activities that it has decided are true indicators of performance. The dilemma is that so much is taking place at so many institutional levels at one time.

Part of the answer lies in establishing meaningful and reliable performance indicators and then setting priorities so that the college can reasonably track them. Another part of the answer lies in expanding the kinds of measures that are used. For example, Partnership for Excellence is based on quantitative measures, such as transfer rates and course completions. Those measures are relatively easy to fulfill, relying as they do on data that all colleges collect. However, they may not be the right indicators to measure learning. More qualitative measures might be more appropriate. In particular, portfolio assessment holds great promise for measuring learning, not only for students but for employees and organizations, as well. Portfolio assessment, discussed below, provides for the key component of learning: reflection. It may also be a means of measuring the strength of both the individual's and the institution's growth in terms of the five disciplines.

The answer to the question posed by this study has many aspects. Eventually one must combine those aspects and plot the result on a yes/no continuum. My answer to the first part of the question – are colleges preparing their staff – is more yes than no. In fact,

examination of professional development programs and interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators revealed that a great deal of preparation was taking place – more than could be accounted for. Colleges were using a variety of approaches, usually through professional development, to provide opportunities for staff to acquire organizational skills.

However, there is one significant fact that must be considered. Most colleges consciously and unconsciously did not call these activities what they were, that is, activities to create a learning organization. Thus, if one were to ask the question without probing further, it might appear that little in the way of the development of learning organization skills was occurring because colleges typically did not use those terms or think of themselves as learning organizations. One of the recommendations of this study, discussed below, addresses the need for colleges to make more explicit their attempts to develop the organizational skills of employees.

Recommendations

Based on the information collected in the course of this study, there are eight recommendations for colleges who have committed to or want to commit to becoming learning-centered institutions.

Define terms. As this study has shown, defining terms and therefore concepts, is critical. A *learning college* and a *learning organization* are not the same thing, and both are different from a *learning community*, if one uses O'Banion's definitions. A college can be a learning college without being a learning organization, but the findings of this

study strongly support an explicit commitment to becoming a learning organization, as well. Part of defining terms involves becoming educated about the available options and understanding whether and how they fit with all the college's goals.

Know the cultures. There are multiple cultures at work in a community college: the culture of higher education, the culture of the individual college, the culture of different constituency groups (students, faculty, staff, administrators) within the college, the cultures of different disciplines, and the cultures of individuals, to name a few. Resnick and Hall's (1998) model of nested learning communities is helpful in visualizing the interrelationship of college groups in a learning context.

Understanding these cultures and their interplay is critical to the success of any significant change. This study has revealed that it is all too easy for college administration to attempt to introduce new ideas without considering the assumptions held by the various constituencies and without making sure to present the ideas in such a way that they will not be rejected out of hand. One specific recommendation is to invite proponents of new ideas to present them in a panel discussion so that faculty and staff do not feel that any single point of view is one they are expected to adopt. Another recommendation is to identify and resolve any conflicts regarding roles of faculty, staff, and administrators in the learning process. These assumptions, or mental models, must be acknowledged and addressed if the college is to work as a team. Finally, avoid the either-or dilemma. Too frequently, the issues are narrowed to two options. For example, many faculty, staff, and administrators perceive that colleges can be either teaching-

centered or learning-centered, but not both. "Whipped from one side to another, we fail to find a synthesis that might embrace the best of both approaches" (Palmer, 1997, p. 5).

Make the learning needs of the organization as important and as explicit as the learning needs of students. In a learning-centered college, everyone is a learner, and there are multiple levels of learning: individual, departmental, divisional, and institutional. Learning at all levels must be purposeful, which means that it must be explicit, it must be useful, and it must be assessed. The strength of community colleges – their shared vision of student success – can also be a weakness if the organization does not value its own success. Consider the safety instructions given by the flight attendant prior to take-off. If there is a sudden change in pressure, adults should put on their oxygen masks first and then assist their children. Similarly, organizations must ensure their well-being first if they are to assume responsibility for that of their students.

Make professional development an integral part of institutional planning. Professional development in the California community colleges tends to be treated as an optional activity, regardless of legislative mandate. Within the programs themselves, most colleges have a mix of required and self-selected activities, but self-selection prevails. If colleges wish to strengthen organizational skills, then those must be identified and all employees should be expected to acquire them, though there can be options as to the means by which they are acquired. In addition, an assessment and evaluation component needs to be established so that the college can measure whether a given activity was effective. In those cases where professional development funds are used primarily to support traditional activities, such as conference attendance, colleges

should ensure that participants have a means of feeding back their experiences into the system.

Specify organizational skills in job announcements. When it comes to organizational skills, such as the ability to work in teams, all the colleges in this study indicated that they look for those skills in second-level interviews, especially in the case of faculty. Except for boiler-plate language about working with diverse groups, no college in the study specified in the job announcements the organizational skills that they expected applicants to possess. If these skills are critical to the success of the organization, then colleges should consider making them known at the point of application.

Support professional development. As community colleges undergo the transformation from teaching- to learning-centered institutions (O'Banion,1997b) and from an individual to a systems-level of analysis (Oromaner, 1997), one might expect an increasing recognition of the necessity for comprehensive faculty and staff development programs (Oromaner, 1998, p. 1). At least two studies, one by the Commission on Innovation (1993) and one by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (1999), stress the need for in-depth, systemwide professional development. There are several aspects to this recommendation. One is integrating professional development into the planning processes, as discussed above. As some colleges indicated, this may involve reorganizing their administrative structures. There is no single organizational model for professional development that fits all colleges, since each college's culture is unique.

Another aspect is ensuring that the coordinator has sufficient time and training to assess individual and institutional needs, plan, implement, and evaluate. Coordinators appeared to be assigned by default rather than design, but they also appeared to be among some of the college's best and brightest staff. All knew that there is much to be learned in the field of human resource development but expressed frustration in having little or no opportunity to acquire that knowledge and skills.

It is not only the coordinators that need time. Time is also an issue for participants. Few would argue that the average community college teaching schedule or administrative work week permits little time for the kind of experience, practice, and reflection that lead to learning. Thought should be given to reexamining the most fundamental assumptions about the academic year, for example. If colleges are serious about strengthening the organization, it may be that they will have to reconsider the constraints of the semester system and the typical 10-month faculty contract.

Given the recent infusion of $100 million into the system for Partnership for Excellence, money was seldom mentioned as a problem. Nevertheless, it is still a consideration. As noted in this study, the state allocation for staff development has not increased since it was established over a decade ago. Additional money that has materialized has been targeted toward technology training. Allocation schema used by various colleges can restrict the availability of funds for new activities. As with any activity, colleges and the state should determine what they want professional development to provide and then determine how much additional state and/or local support will be necessary to augment the state allocation.

Develop feedback mechanisms based on continuous assessment and evaluation. As noted repeatedly in this study, the lack of viable feedback mechanisms was a common problem for colleges, perhaps because they are difficult to design and implement at the classroom and institutional levels. In respect to professional development, there is little in place to strengthen organizational learning, yet learning cannot take place without this component.

One recommendation is to use qualitative as well as quantitative measures to assess individual and organizational learning. Of particular value may be portfolio assessment, which can be used to measure both the progress of learners as well as the performance of faculty and staff. The chief advantage of portfolio assessment is that it requires reflection, a critical component of learning.

Providing time and incentive for reflection is a powerful tool for strengthening a learning organization. Argyris and Schön (1981) described three levels of learning. The simplest and the one that involves no significant change is called single-loop learning. It usually occurs at the operations level. The second level, double-loop learning, leads to significant change in behavior and is fundamental to effecting strategic change. The third level, deutero learning, is that level of learning at which an "organization is able to reflect on its ability to learn and to influence it" (Peterson et al., 1997, p. 346). Reflection is too often perceived as a passive activity and not productive. Systems theorists such as Argyris, Schön, and Senge would argue that reflection is the most active and productive stage of strategic planning. Like any other organization intent on meeting its mission,

community colleges need to value this level of learning and create an environment and processes that encourage and support it.

Think of faculty, staff, and administrators as learners.

> Educators are learners. . . . We are learners of our discipline and students of our clientele. (Cranton, 1996, pp. 1,5)

> The teacher-as-learner concept is the centerpiece linking classroom and school improvement. (Fullan, Bennett, & Rolheiser-Bennett, May 1990, p. 15)

All staff development programs are required by AB1725 to conduct needs assessments. A typical needs assessment amounts to a checklist survey distributed to faculty and staff. A kind of one-size-fits-all approach is then used to deliver professional development activities, usually workshops and money for conference attendance. However, what is known about adult development and professional career stages, as well as the bipolar nature of faculty demographics (Schuster & Wheeler, 1990, p. 12), suggests that colleges need to be much more proactive in determining the characteristics of faculty and staff and providing opportunities for activities that are designed to meet their varying needs. A 50-year-old instructor who has been teaching 25 years has different needs and interests than a 25-year-old instructor in her first year of teaching. Likewise, a 40-year-old instructor in only his second or third year of teaching has unique needs. There are also differences in terms of skills training and content development. These factors should be considered in planning meaningful professional development at both the individual and organizational levels.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study used mission or vision statements as a means of identifying colleges that had formally committed to being learning-centered. Many colleges were vague about whether the statements they have made are mission, vision, philosophy, or values statements or a combination. They were not clear on the differences. This study did not examine the process by which colleges created such statements, nor did it fully measure the impact of those statements on the day-to-day operations of the college. This researcher, along with others, noticed the evolution that has taken place in the statements colleges have created over the past decade. Since they are the most public statements of a college's values, an in-depth study of their evolution, nature, and impact is warranted.

This study did not identify model professional development programs. In the course of the research that was conducted, it was evident that a number of colleges were making efforts to revise and expand their professional development programs. Further research on best practices in professional development would be useful. In addition, this study only touched upon the contributions that could be made from the field of human resource development. This is another area that would be fruitful to examine in relation to higher education.

As with any study of this type, peripheral but nonetheless interesting questions arose during the research phase. Unfortunately, they were paths that could not be pursued in order to remain focused on this effort. Some of these questions or issues are described below and may provide useful information to the field of professional development in learning-centered community colleges.

Organizational Values in Higher Education

One of the original sources of motivation for this study was a dissertation written by Roseann Stevenson (Stevenson, 1995). In her study, Stevenson examined which organizational values are espoused in business and industry and clarified the behavioral expectations associated with organizational values and management. As part of her study, she produced a taxonomy of values gleaned from the mission statements of companies. Given the emphasis on the creation of values and mission statements as part of the planning process in community colleges, it would be interesting and perhaps useful to apply Dr. Stevenson's thesis to higher education.

Double-loop Learning in Higher Education

All colleges in this study indicated frustration with weak or non-existent feedback mechanisms, yet such mechanisms are vital to organizational learning. In addition, they are critical to achieving and sustaining continuous improvement, now more important than ever with performance-based funding. Colleges need practical assistance in designing and implementing such mechanisms. It would be very useful for a study to identify current best practices and/or to propose models. Along these same lines, it would be interesting to know if computer simulations such as STELLA can be used successfully to assist in the planning efforts of community colleges.

Disciplinarity and the Future of Community Colleges

A recurrent theme in the interviews conducted for this study was the need to become more interdisciplinary in terms of both curriculum and institutional problem-solving. Although they are potentially more flexible in this respect than other segments of higher education, it would be a mistake to think that community colleges are not beset by many of the same problems which make interdisciplinary activities so difficult to develop and administer. It would be valuable to have a study examine the nature and scope of interdisciplinary activities in community colleges in light of state regulations affecting funding and minimum teaching qualifications. Presently, a task force is reviewing the state's educational code to see what, if anything, can be eliminated to give colleges the flexibility to change as necessary to meet students' needs. A study on the outcomes of this process would also be valuable.

Systems Thinkers

During the course of this study, a pattern emerged. Many of those community college staff most inclined to systems thinking turned out to have backgrounds in English and the social sciences. So marked was this phenomenon that it raised the question as to whether a discipline could be considered as a factor in assembling planning teams.

The Learning Revolution

It has been speculated that the learning revolution is more than a passing phase in higher educational reform. A longitudinal study to determine the impact of this phenomenon would be informative.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A: § 7150-4 of the California State Education Code (AB 1725)

§87150-4 (g) Community college instructors, recruited directly from graduate school or from some form of employment other than teaching, may not be prepared to deal effectively with the wide range of student abilities and attitudes found in community college classrooms. As larger numbers of students from many different cultural backgrounds and with significant English language and other deficiencies are enrolled, the problem will become more serious for both administrators and faculty. The proposed establishment of a student assessment, counseling, and placement program on each campus will also require additional training and assistance for both faculty and administrators.

(h) Professional development for faculty, support staff, student services staff, and administrators is vital. Further, the success of the assessment, counseling, and placement programs will depend upon the effectiveness of this training.

(i) The recruitment of faculty into the community colleges, and the maintaining of morale and enthusiasm among the faculty depends in large part upon the intellectual and personal environment within which faculty work. Much of that environment is created by their own authority over the substantive direction of the programs and courses in which they work, through the quality of their relationship with the college administration, and in the quality of their interactions with the communities of students they teach. At the same time, it is apparent that faculty morale comes from their engagement in the development of new and innovative programs, from their engagement in professional and discipline-based associations, and from an active, intellectual life as scholars and teachers.

(j) Community colleges have less resources available for faculty professional and intellectual development than do other segments of the system of higher education, and this disparity may become a substantial barrier to the future recruitment of quality faculty. Yet, faculty in the community colleges should be no less intellectually engaged than their colleagues in the other segments. Their primary commitment to teaching makes it imperative that they have a vibrant and rich intellectual life.

Per the Education Code, §87153, the authorized uses of staff development funds are:

a. Improvement of teaching

b. Maintenance of current academic and technical knowledge and skills

c. In-service training for vocational education and employment preparation programs

d. Retraining to meet institutional needs

e. Intersegmental exchange programs

f. Development of innovations in instructional and administrative techniques and program effectiveness.

g. Computer and technological proficiency programs.

h. Courses and training implementing affirmative action and upward mobility programs

i. Other activities determined to be related to educational and professional development pursuant to criteria established by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, including, but not necessarily limited to, programs designed to develop self-esteem.

Appendix B: Definitions of Terms

AB1725: California Assembly Bill 1725, passed in 1988, attempted to both restructure and reform the California community colleges. It addressed a number of key areas including governance, mission and functions, and staffing and mandated staff development programs for the state's community (Griffin, 1997).

Andragogy: the art or science of leading adult learning. See chapter 3 for an in-depth discussion of andragogy and andragogy in relation to pedagogy.

Bureaucracy: a type of administrative agency characterized by:

- regular activities distributed in fixed ways as official duties;
- positions arranged on the principle of office hierarchy and of levels of graded authority;
- management of activities controlled by general rules which are more or less stable, more or less exhaustive, and which can be learned;
- employment based upon technical competence and which constitutes a career. (Abbott, 1969, p. 43; Weber, 1963)

Change (organizational or cultural): real changes in the behavior of people throughout the organization. In a technical sense, people in the organization identifying with new role-model heroes, telling different stories to one another to explain what is occurring around them, and spending their time differently on a day-to-day basis. Change in this sense is pervasive, "a cultural transformation" (Deal & Kennedy,

1982, p 159). Senge et al. (1999, pp. 6, 10) observes that most organizational change efforts fail because they cannot be sustained without a fundamental shift in the way we think about change. He proposes a biologically oriented model, the "dance of change," that is based on the interplay between growth and limiting processes. Peterson et al. (1997) noted that "there is an emerging reconceptionalization of organizational change that emphasizes individual learning as the core process in organizational change. Organizational change itself is viewed as organizational learning" (Peterson et al., 1997, p. 345).

Culture: provides meaning and context for a specific group of people and helps to define the nature of reality for those people who are part of that culture. According to Bergquist, culture serves an overarching purpose. It is established around the production of something valued by its members. It does not exist for itself but to provide a context. In respect to academic organizations, the culture must be understood within the context of the educational purposes of collegiate institutions (Bergquist, 1992, pp. 2-3).

Double-loop Learning: one of three levels of learning as defined by Argyris and Schön (1981). The simplest level and the one that involves no significant change is called single-loop learning. It usually occurs at the operations level. The second level, double-loop learning, leads to significant change in behavior and is fundamental to effecting strategic change. The third level, deutero learning, is that level of learning at which an "organization is able to reflect on its ability to learn and to influence it" (Peterson et. al, 1997, p. 346).

Learning: "a process by which behavior changes as a result of experience" (Maples, 1980, p.1). Merriam & Caffarella (1991) noted that most definitions of learning include the concepts of behavioral change and experience. Hergenhahn (1988, p. 7) added two other important dimensions: (a) The change is a relatively permanent one, and (b) learning includes the potential for change.

Learning community: "a curricular intervention designed to enhance collaboration and expand learning. . . [and which] purposefully restructures the curriculum to link together courses or course work so that students find greater coherence in what they are learning, as well as increased intellectual interaction with faculty and students" (O'Banion, 1996, p. 1).

Learning organization: one in which "people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together." O'Banion (1996) based his definition on that of Senge (1990, p. 3), and noted, "In some ways, a learning organization is designed for the staff of the institution, while a learning-centered institution is designed for the students" (O'Banion, 1996, p. 2).

Learning college: a term which "is much more useful in describing the comprehensive nature of a community college committed to placing learning first than are the terms *learning communities* and *learning organizations*. The learning college places learning first and provides educational experiences for learners any way, any place, any time" (O'Banion, 1996, p. 2).

Profession or professional: " the concept of a profession closely tied to an implicit social contract, whereby professionals are given a degree of autonomy by a society which expects them to use their expertise altruistically for the benefit of others. The arrangement recognizes both that a profession possesses unique expertise and that the expertise has to be uniquely exercised by individual professionals in unique situations" (Eraut, 1993, p. 25). Resnick and Hall (1998, p. 12) argued that a redefinition of the term "professional" is warranted. Whereas a professional was once considered to be someone who had already acquired expertise, now a professional is defined as someone who is continually learning.

Professional development: the "development, self-development, and institutional management of faculty (or academic) staff at all levels. . . with reference to their activities and responsibilities as teachers and managers in higher education (Zuber-Skerritt, 1992, p. 145). *Staff development* and *professional development* are often used as synonyms, even though the terms have different origins (Webb, 1996, p. 1). *Human resource development* is an emerging concept in higher education, but the term is not widely used.

Appendix C: Comparing Educational Paradigms

Table 11

Comparing Educational Paradigms

The Instruction Paradigm	The Learning Paradigm
Mission and Purposes	
➢ Provide/deliver instruction	➢ Produce learning
➢ Transfer knowledge from faculty to students	➢ Elicit student discovery and construction of knowledge
➢ Offer courses and programs	➢ Create powerful learning environments
➢ Improve the quality of instruction	➢ Improve the quality of learning
➢ Achieve access for diverse students	➢ Achieve success for diverse students
Criteria for Success	
➢ Inputs, resources	➢ Learning and student-success outcomes
➢ Quality of entering students	➢ Quality of exiting students
➢ Curriculum development, expansion	➢ Learning technologies development, expansion
➢ Quantity and quality of resources	➢ Quantity and quality of outcomes
➢ Enrollment, revenue growth	➢ Aggregate learning growth, efficiency
➢ Quality of faculty, instruction	➢ Quality of students, learning
Teaching/Learning Structures	
➢ Atomistic; parts prior to whole	➢ Holistic; whole prior to parts
➢ Time held constant, learning varies	➢ Learning held constant, time varies
➢ 50-minute lecture, 3-unit course	➢ Learning environments
➢ Classes start/end at same time	➢ Environment ready when student is
➢ One teacher, one classroom	➢ Whatever learning experience works
➢ Independent disciplines, departments	➢ Cross discipline/department collaboration
➢ Covering material	➢ Specified learning results
➢ End-of-course assessment	➢ Pre/during/post assessments
➢ Grading within classes by instructors	➢ External evaluations of learning
➢ Private assessment	➢ Public assessment
➢ Degree equals accumulated credit hours	➢ Degree equals demonstrated knowledge and skills

Learning Theory	
➢ Knowledge exists "out there"	➢ Knowledge exists in each person's mind and is shaped by individual experience
➢ Knowledge comes in "chunks" and "bits" delivered by instructors	➢ Knowledge is constructed, created, and "gotten"
➢ Learning is cumulative and linear	➢ Learning is a nesting and interacting of frameworks
➢ Fits the storehouse of knowledge metaphor	➢ Fits learning how to ride a bicycle metaphor
➢ Learning is teacher centered and controlled	➢ Learning is student centered and controlled
➢ "Live" teacher, "live" students required	➢ "Active" learning required, but not "live" teacher
➢ The classroom and learning are competitive and individualistic	➢ Learning environments and learning are cooperative, collaborative, and supportive
➢ Talent and ability are rare	➢ Talent and ability are abundant
Productivity/Funding	
➢ Definition of productivity: cost per hour of instruction per student	➢ Definition of productivity: cost per unit of learning per student
➢ Funding for hours of instruction	➢ Funding for learning outcomes
Nature of Roles	
➢ Faculty are primarily lecturers	➢ Faculty are primarily designers
➢ Faculty and students act independently and in isolation	➢ Faculty and students work in teams with each other and other staff
➢ Teachers classify and sort students	➢ Teachers develop every student's competencies and talents
➢ Staff serve/support faculty and the process of instruction	➢ All staff are educators who produce student learning and success
➢ Any expert can teach	➢ Empowering learning is challenging and complex
➢ Line governance; independent actors	➢ Shared governance; teamwork

From "From Teaching to Learning – A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education," by R. Barr and J. Tagg, 1995, *Change*, 27 (6). Reprinted with permission of the Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation. Published by Heldref Publications, 1319-18th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036-1802. Copyright ©1995.

Appendix D: Components of Professional Development

Table 12

Components of Professional Development

1.	Faculty members are the most important educational resource of a college or university.
2.	Teaching is the primary, though by no means the only, professional activity of most faculty members.
3.	Scholarship and research – another major professional activity – need not be antithetical to effective teaching.
4.	Teaching is much neglected by academic tradition.
5.	Although there is little systematic evidence about how good the quality of teaching and learning actually are in most institutions, there is a general feeling, shared by many within and outside academia, that it can be improved.
6.	Improving teaching requires working with administrators and students – perhaps even members of the larger community.
7.	Administrators have little training for the leadership, policy formulation, administrative, and managerial roles of their work.
8.	Teaching is a complex set of attitudes, knowledge, skills, motivations, and values.
9.	Effective teaching involves help students to attain desired learning objectives.
10.	There is no single model of effective teaching or learning; proposals advanced as panaceas with a doctrinaire approach are suspect and to be avoided.
11.	There is great diversity among students.
12.	Faculty members, too, are a diverse lot. They vary on such key factors as age, field of specialization, teaching experience, and educational philosophy.
13.	An individual's professional work is intimately connected with his personal life.
14.	Intrinsic interest rather than extrinsic demand is what leads individuals to seek improvement.
15.	The willing involvement of faculty members is necessary if enduring improvement is to be obtained.
16.	Every institution contains many persons with expertise and experience which may be included in instructional improvement programs.
17.	Teaching and learning are individual but not solitary activities; they occur within a social context

From Toward Faculty Renewal (pp. 5-7), by J. G. Gaff, 1976, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Appendix E: Demographics for Colleges Used as Case Studies

College A
Management Information Services
Unduplicated Student Headcount Enrollments
Fall 1998

Age Groups

19 or less	4,673	21.4%
20-24	6,877	31.5%
25-29	3,381	15.5%
30-34	2,028	9.3%
35-39	1,516	6.9%
40-49	1,893	8.7%
50+	1,496	6.8%

Gender Groups

Female	12,527	57.3%
Male	9,337	42.7%
Unknown	0	

Ethnic Groups

Asian	2,028	9.3%
Black	1,623	7.4%
Filipino	842	3.9%
Hispanic	9,443	43.2%
Am Indian	250	1.1%
Other	788	3.6%
White	3,334	15.2%
Unknown	3,556	16.3%

Day/Evening Status

Day	14,060
Evening	7,667
Unknown	137

Enrollment Status

First-time Student	4,283
First-time Transfer	1,751
Returning Transfer	557
Returning Student	1,609
Continuing Student	12,348
Uncollected/Unreported	1,013
Not Applicable	303

Academic Level

Special Admit – K-12	303
Freshman No HS Grad	1,130
Freshman & c/adult school	995
Freshman HS Graduate	12,362
Sophomore No HS Grad	128
Sophomore HS Graduate	3,287
AA Degree	466
BA Degree	789
Other No HS Grad >=60 units	65
Other HS Grad >=60 units	2,319
Unknown	20

Unit Load

Non-Credit	1,024
0.1-2.9	1,394
3.0-5.9	6,229
6.0-8.9	4,747
9.0-11.9	3,415
12.0-14.9	3,708
15+	1,347

College B
Management Information Services
Unduplicated Student Headcount Enrollments
Fall 1998

Age Groups

19 or less	3,965	26.3%
20-24	3,257	21.6%
25-29	1,603	10.6%
30-34	1,378	9.1%
35-39	1,407	9.3%
40-49	2,254	15.0%
50+	1,208	8.0%
Unknown	2	

Gender Groups

Female	9,106	60.4%
Male	5,966	39.6%
Unknown	2	0.0%

Ethnic Groups

Asian	1,953	13.0%
Black	1,472	9.8%
Filipino	528	3.5%
Hispanic	1,569	10.4%
Am Indian	265	1.8%
Other	452	3.0%
Pac Isle	193	1.3%
White	8,630	57.3%
Unknown	12	0.1%

Day/Evening Status

Day	8,630
Evening	6,316
Unknown	128

Enrollment Status

First-time Student	2,585
First-time Transfer	1,984
Returning Transfer	698
Returning Student	1,649
Continuing Student	6,963
Uncollected/Unreported	2
Not Applicable	1,193

Academic Level

Special Admit – K-12	1,193
Freshman No HS Grad	556
Freshman & c/adult school	40
Freshman HS Graduate	8,555
Sophomore No HS Grad	70
Sophomore & c/adult school	1
Sophomore HS Graduate	1,561
AA Degree	1,007
BA Degree	1,387
Other No HS Grad >=60 units	21
Other HS Grad >=60 units	681
Unknown	2

Unit Load

Non-Credit	21
0.1-2.9	2,383
3.0-5.9	5,419
6.0-8.9	2,445
9.0-11.9	1,557
12.0-14.9	2,260
15+	989

College C
Management Information Services
Unduplicated Student Headcount Enrollments
Fall 1998

Age Groups

19 or less	6,950	25.2%
20-24	6,794	24.7%
25-29	3,153	11.4%
30-34	2,156	7.8%
35-39	2,008	7.3%
40-49	2,959	10.7%
50+	3,526	12.8%
Unknown	7	0.0%

Gender Groups

Female	14,860	54.1%
Male	12,617	45.9%
Unknown	76	

Ethnic Groups

Asian	1,260	4.6%
Black	917	3.3%
Filipino	719	2.6%
Hispanic	5,924	21.5%
Am Indian	372	1.4%
Other	351	1.3%
Pac Isle	171	0.6%
White	15,775	57.3%
Unknown	2,064	7.5%

Day/Evening Status

Day	15,602
Evening	10,009
Unknown	1,942

Enrollment Status

First-time Student	5,655
First-time Transfer	2,525
Returning Transfer	265
Returning Student	4,834
Continuing Student	12,737
Uncollected/Unreported	1
Not Applicable	1,536

Academic Level

Special Admit – K-12	1,539
Freshman No HS Grad	646
Freshman & c/adult school	136
Freshman HS Graduate	12,728
Sophomore No HS Grad	55
Sophomore & c/adult school	20
Sophomore HS Graduate	3,407
AA Degree	1,224
BA Degree	2,019
Other No HS Grad >=60 units	42
Other HS Grad >=60 units	2,405
Unknown	3,332

Unit Load

Non-Credit	4,123
0.1-2.9	1,681
3.0-5.9	7,893
6.0-8.9	4,568
9.0-11.9	2,915
12.0-14.9	4,089
15+	2,284

College D
Management Information Services
Unduplicated Student Headcount Enrollments
Fall 1998

Age Groups

19 or less	7,051	25.5%
20-24	8,668	31.3%
25-29	3,855	13.9%
30-34	2,351	8.5%
35-39	1,783	6.4%
40-49	2,109	7.6%
50+	1,847	6.7%
Unknown	4	0.0%

Gender Groups

Female	15,450	57.8%
Male	11,284	42.2%
Unknown	934	

Ethnic Groups

Asian	7,135	25.8%
Black	1,746	6.3%
Filipino	1,053	3.8%
Hispanic	8,392	30.3%
Am Indian	187	0.7%
Other	1,149	4.2%
Pac Isle	81	0.3%
White	4,965	17.9%
Unknown	2,960	10.7%

Day/Evening Status

Day	19,950
Evening	7,206
Unknown	512

Enrollment Status

First-time Student	5,222
First-time Transfer	2,913
Returning Transfer	411
Returning Student	2,278
Continuing Student	15,018
Uncollected/Unreported	1,031
Not Applicable	795

Academic Level

Special Admit – K-12	795
Freshman No HS Grad	3,398
Freshman & c/adult school	680
Freshman HS Graduate	13,675
Sophomore No HS Grad	72
Sophomore & c/adult school	25
Sophomore HS Graduate	3,904
AA Degree	538
BA Degree	1,678
Other No HS Grad >=60 units	82
Other HS Grad >=60 units	2,481
Unknown	340

Unit Load

Non-Credit	4,349
0.1-2.9	1,296
3.0-5.9	5,911
6.0-8.9	4,651
9.0-11.9	4,054
12.0-14.9	5,473
15+	1,934

College E
Management Information Services
Unduplicated Student Headcount Enrollments
Fall 1998

Age Groups

19 or less	3,359	27.2%
20-24	4,292	34.8%
25-29	1,626	13.2%
30-34	914	7.4%
35-39	750	6.1%
40-49	923	7.5%
50+	469	3.8%
Unknown	12	0.1%

Gender Groups

Female	6,161	50.1%
Male	6,129	49.9%
Unknown	55	

Ethnic Groups

Asian	758	6.1%
Black	242	2.0%
Filipino	118	1.0%
Hispanic	3,054	24.7%
Am Indian	121	1.0%
Other	242	2.0%
Pac Isle	38	0.3%
White	7,618	61.7%
Unknown	154	1.2%

Day/Evening Status

Day	9,065
Evening	2,928
Unknown	352

Enrollment Status

First-time Student	2,223
First-time Transfer	1,502
Returning Transfer	221
Returning Student	1,347
Continuing Student	6,733
Not Applicable	319

Academic Level

Special Admit – K-12	319
Freshman No HS Grad	657
Freshman & c/adult school	1
Freshman HS Graduate	6,817
Sophomore No HS Grad	142
Sophomore HS Graduate	1,922
AA Degree	475
BA Degree	1,167
Other No HS Grad >=60 units	76
Other HS Grad >=60 units	768
Unknown	1

Unit Load

Non-Credit	5
0.1-2.9	661
3.0-5.9	2,866
6.0-8.9	2,092
9.0-11.9	1,776
12.0-14.9	3,373
15+	1,572

College F
Management Information Services
Unduplicated Student Headcount Enrollments
Fall 1998

Age Groups

19 or less	3,305	22.4%
20-24	2.851	19.4%
25-29	1,278	8.7%
30-34	857	5.8%
35-39	801	5.4%
40-49	1,281	8.7%
50+	4,099	27.8%
Unknown	255	1.7%

Gender Groups

Female	9,079	63.5%
Male	5,213	36.5%
Unknown	435	

Ethnic Groups

Asian	2,122	14.4%
Black	361	2.5%
Filipino	228	1.5%
Hispanic	1,584	10.8%
Am Indian	98	0.7%
Other	317	2.2%
Pac Isle	77	0.5%
White	9,232	62.7%
Unknown	708	4.8%

Day/Evening Status

Day	7,433
Evening	3,906
Unknown	3,388

Enrollment Status

First-time Student	2,148
First-time Transfer	1,719
Returning Transfer	297
Returning Student	956
Continuing Student	5,362
Uncollected/Unreported	847
Not Applicable	748

Academic Level

Special Admit – K-12	748
Freshman No HS Grad	227
Freshman & c/adult school	18
Freshman HS Graduate	6,008
Sophomore No HS Grad	23
Sophomore & c/adult school	2
Sophomore HS Graduate	1,538
AA Degree	650
BA Degree	1,496
Other No HS Grad >=60 units	14
Other HS Grad >=60 units	847
Unknown	3,156

Unit Load

Non-Credit	3,441
0.1-2.9	1,816
3.0-5.9	2,976
6.0-8.9	1,694
9.0-11.9	1,448
12.0-14.9	2,145
15+	1,207

Appendix F: Research Materials

Introductory Letter

(Date)

(Staff Development Coordinator)
(Address)

Dear (Staff Development Coordinator):

My name is Harriett J. Robles, Dean of Instruction and Matriculation, at West Valley College (on leave spring 99) and a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership and Change program at The Fielding Institute, Santa Barbara, CA.

The subject of my research and dissertation is how California community colleges are explicitly preparing their workforce (faculty, staff, administration) in order to support colleges' development as learning-centered organizations. As part of my research, I have reviewed the mission statements and the staff development plans of each California community college. As a result, I have selected your college as one which I think would provide valuable information for this study. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and other pertinent faculty and staff to obtain more specific information about your staff development program and other related activities. I anticipate that my visit to your campus would take no more than two hours total of your time and will consist of a taped interview addressing questions which I will provide to you in advance. Please be assured that all information used in this study will be reported anonymously. Colleges will be referred to by a designated letter (e.g., College A), and persons will be referred to by title, not name. Each person interviewed will have an opportunity to review and correct the information I collect in the course of his/her interview.

If you are able to assist me, please contact me via e-mail or at the above address. I will then contact you to select a day and construct an interview schedule.

I appreciate your taking this time to help and look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Harriett J. Robles

Informed Consent Form

Harriett J. Robles
(mailing address)
(e-mail address)

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

You have been asked to participate in a research study conducted by Harriett J. Robles, a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership and Change Program at The Fielding Institute, Santa Barbara, CA. This research involves the study of staff development activities to support the development of learning colleges and is part of Ms. Robles' Fielding dissertation. You have been selected for this study because your college's mission includes the goal of becoming a learning college.

The study involves one conversational interview to be arranged at your convenience that is expected to last approximately one to two hours. Upon completion of all interviews, the Researcher will phone you to discuss the tentative nature of his/her findings. This phone conversation is expected to last 15 minutes. Hence, the total time involved in participation will be no more than 2 hours, 15 minutes.

The Research Ethics Committee of The Fielding Institute retains access to all materials pertinent to the evaluation of research ethics. The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. The tape recordings will be listened to only by the Researcher and you will be asked to provide a different name for any quotes that might be included in the final research report. You will also have the opportunity to remove any quotations when the Researcher contacts you by phone. In addition, the tapes and all related research materials will be kept in a secure file cabinet and destroyed five years after the completion of the study. The results from these interviews will be incorporated into Ms. Robles' doctoral dissertation.

You may develop greater personal awareness of the role of staff development in creating a learning college as a result of your participation in this research . The risks to you are considered minimal; there is only a small chance that you may experience some emotional discomfort during or after the interview. Should you experience such discomfort, please contact the Researcher at the phone number listed above to discuss your reactions. In addition, you may withdraw from this study at any time (either during or after the interview) without negative consequences. Should you withdraw, your data will be eliminated from the study. There is no financial remuneration for participating in this study.

In addition to discussing the preliminary results with the Researcher by phone, you also may request a copy of the summary of the final results by indicating your interest on the attached form.

Harriett J. Robles
(mailing address)
(e-mail address)

INFORMED CONSENT RESPONSE FORM

(Return one signed copy in the envelope provided.)

Two copies of this informed consent form have been provided. Please sign both, indicating you have read, understood, and agreed to participate in this research. Return one to the Researcher and keep the other for your files.

Do you have any questions about any aspect of this study or your involvement?

☐ No

☐ Yes

_____

_____

_____

NAME OF PARTICIPANT (please print) _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT _____

DATE _____

FACULTY ADVISOR'S NAME, ADDRESS & TELEPHONE NUMBER

The Fielding Institute/Research Ethics Committee

Appendix G: Interview Questions

Chief Executive Officer – Chief Instructional Officer – Chief Student Services Officer

1. One of your college's goals is to become a learning college/organization/community. How has the college defined that concept?

2. Do you define a learning college, organization, or community differently? If so, what are the differences?

3. If there is no collegewide definition/or if your definition differs, how would you define it?

4. How would you describe where your college is now in relation to that goal? What is the gap between where you are and where you want to be?

5. In relation to this goal, what are the college's strengths? Weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats?

6. What activities has the college undertaken to achieve this goal? What are you doing differently or in different measure than you did before?

7. What are the skills you believe faculty, staff, and administrators need in order to achieve this goal?

8. What role does staff development play in the pursuit of this goal? How are staff development activities linked to college goals?

9. What activities have been provided to specifically prepare faculty, staff, and administrators to be members of a learning college/organization/community? (Include activities provided outside of formal staff development.)

10. Do you perceive the needs of faculty, staff, and administrators to be different?

11. How would you measure success for your area of responsibility? For the college as a whole?

District/Chancellor

1. One of (college's) goals is to become a learning community. What is your understanding of that goal? How do you/the district define that concept?

2. Do you define a learning college, organization, or community differently? If so, what are the differences?

3. Does the district have a similar goal? If not, do you think it should? Would it be different in any way from the college's goal?

4. What is the district's/your role in supporting this goal?

5. In relation to this goal, what are the college's/district's strengths? Weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats?

6. What activities has the district undertaken to achieve this goal? What are you doing differently or in different measure than you did before?

7. What are the skills you believe faculty, staff, and administrators need in order to achieve this goal? Or, what skills do you think they lack? Based on your experience, is this situation unique to this district or typical of higher education? Do you perceive the needs of faculty, staff, and administrators to be different?

8. What role does staff development play in the pursuit of this goal? How are staff development activities linked to college/district goals?

9. What activities are you aware of that have been provided to specifically prepare faculty, staff, and administrators to be members of a learning community? (Include activities provided outside of formal staff development.)

10. At (district), staff development is a district function. Is this an effective arrangement?

11. How would you measure successful attainment of this goal? What would it look like? What would be different?

Faculty/Staff

1. One of your college's goals is to become a learning college/organization/community. How has the college defined that concept?

2. Do you define a learning college, organization, or community differently? If so, what are the differences?

3. If there is no collegewide definition or your definition differs, how would you define it?

4. How would you describe where your college is now in relation to that goal? What is the gap between where you are and where you want to be?

5. In relation to this goal, what are the college's strengths? Weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats?

6. What activities has the college undertaken to achieve this goal? What are you doing differently or in different measure than you did before?

7. What are the skills you believe faculty, staff, and administrators need in order to achieve this goal?

8. What role does staff development play in the pursuit of this goal? How are staff development activities linked to college goals?

9. What activities have been provided to specifically prepare faculty, staff, and administrators to be members of a learning college/organization/community? (Include activities provided outside of formal staff development.)

10. Do you perceive the needs of faculty, staff, and administrators to be different?

11. How would the classified staff/faculty measure success?

Staff Development Coordinator

1. One of your college's goals is to become a learning college/organization/community. How has the college defined that concept?

2. Do you define a learning college, organization, or community differently? If so, what are the differences?

3. If there is no collegewide definition or your definition differs, how would you define it?

4. How would you describe where your college is now in relation to that goal? What is the gap between where you are and where you want to be?

5. In relation to this goal, what are the college's strengths? Weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats?

6. What activities has the college undertaken to achieve this goal? What are you doing differently or in different measure than you did before?

7. How is staff development coordinated in your college/district? To whom does the coordinator report?

8. What is your staff development budget? (Include state allocation and additional college/district support.)

9. What are the skills you believe faculty, staff, and administrators need in order to achieve this goal?

10. What role does staff development play in the pursuit of this goal? How are staff development activities linked to college goals?

11. What activities have been provided to specifically prepare faculty, staff, and administrators to be members of a learning college/organization/community? (Include activities provided outside of formal staff development.)

12. Do you perceive the needs of faculty, staff, and administrators to be different?

13. How would you measure success?

Follow-up Questions for Staff Development Coordinators (via e-mail):

1. How long have you served as Staff Development Coordinator?
2. How much reassigned time (e.g., 60%) do you receive as Staff Development Coordinator?
3. If you do not receive assigned time, do you receive a stipend?
4. Were you recruited for this position, or did you request/compete for it?
5. Had you had any training or experience in the area of human resource development before you took this position?
6. Were you given any training by your college in human resource development after you took the position?
7. To whom do you report (e.g., president, CIO)?

Senates

1. One of your college's goals is to become a learning college/organization/community. How has the college defined that concept?
2. Do you define a learning college, organization, or community differently? If so, what are the differences?
3. If there is no collegewide definition or your definition differs, how would you define it?
4. How would you describe where your college is now in relation to that goal? What is the gap between where you are and where you want to be?
5. In relation to this goal, what are the college's strengths? Weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats?

6. What activities has the college undertaken to achieve this goal? What are you doing differently or in different measure than you did before?

7. What are the skills you believe faculty, staff, and administrators need in order to achieve this goal?

8. What role does staff development play in the pursuit of this goal? How are staff development activities linked to college goals?

9. What activities have been provided to specifically prepare faculty, staff, and administrators to be members of a learning college/organization/community? (Include activities provided outside of formal staff development.)

10. Do you perceive the needs of faculty, staff, and administrators to be different?

11. How would the classified staff/faculty measure success?

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Organization/Address: West Valley College, 14000 Fruitvale Avenue, Saratoga CA 95070-5698	Telephone: (408) 741-2136 FAX: 408-741-4076
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Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov
WWW: http://ericfac.piccard.csc.com

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